

The Fiery Angel
(Ognyenii Anghel)

1994-1995

Wednesday, October 19, 1994 7:30 PM

Friday, October 21, 1994 8:00 PM

Thursday, October 27, 1994 7:30 PM

Sunday, October 30, 1994 2:00 PM

Tuesday, November 1, 1994 8:00 PM

Saturday, November 5, 1994 8:00 PM

Wednesday, November 9, 1994 8:00 PM

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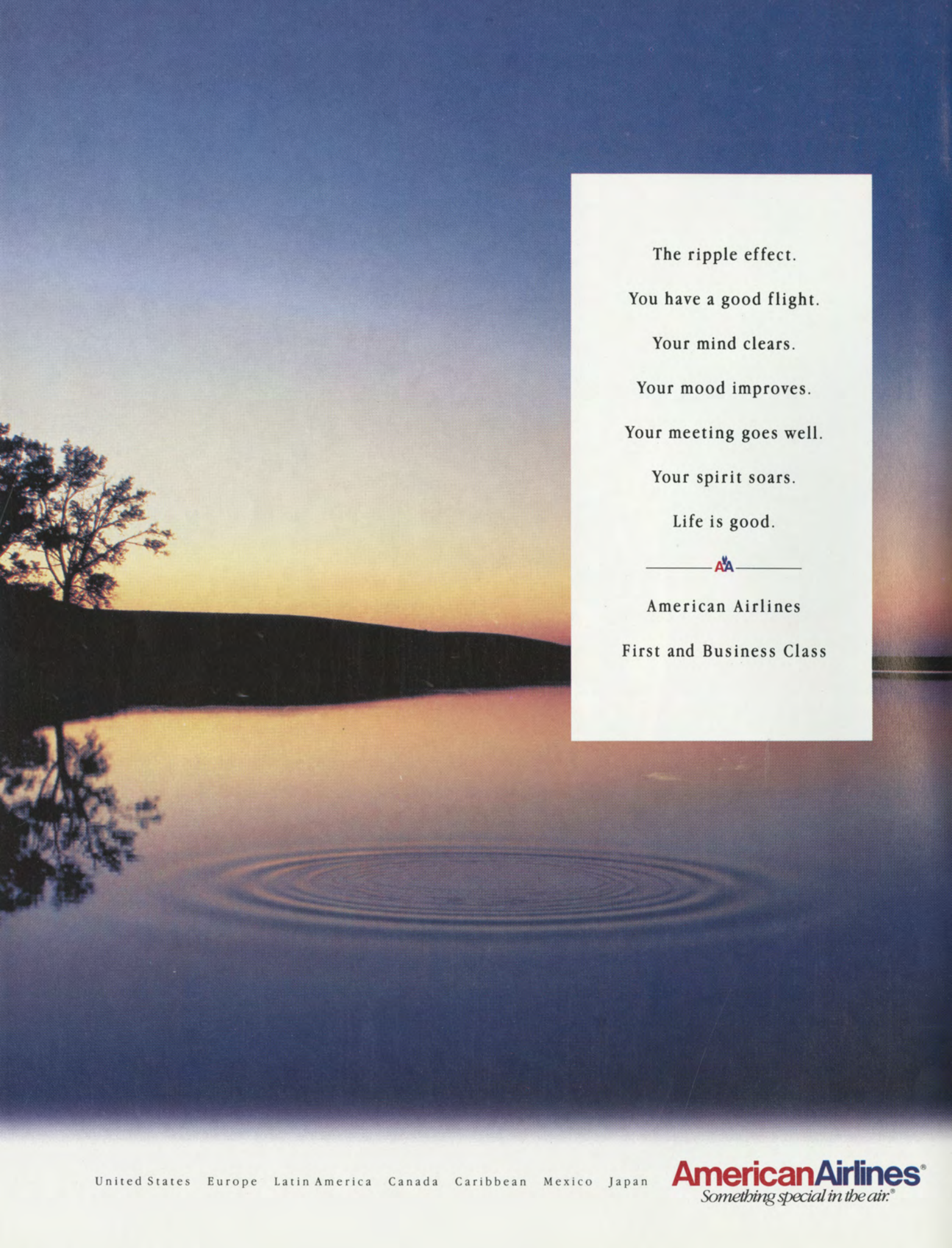
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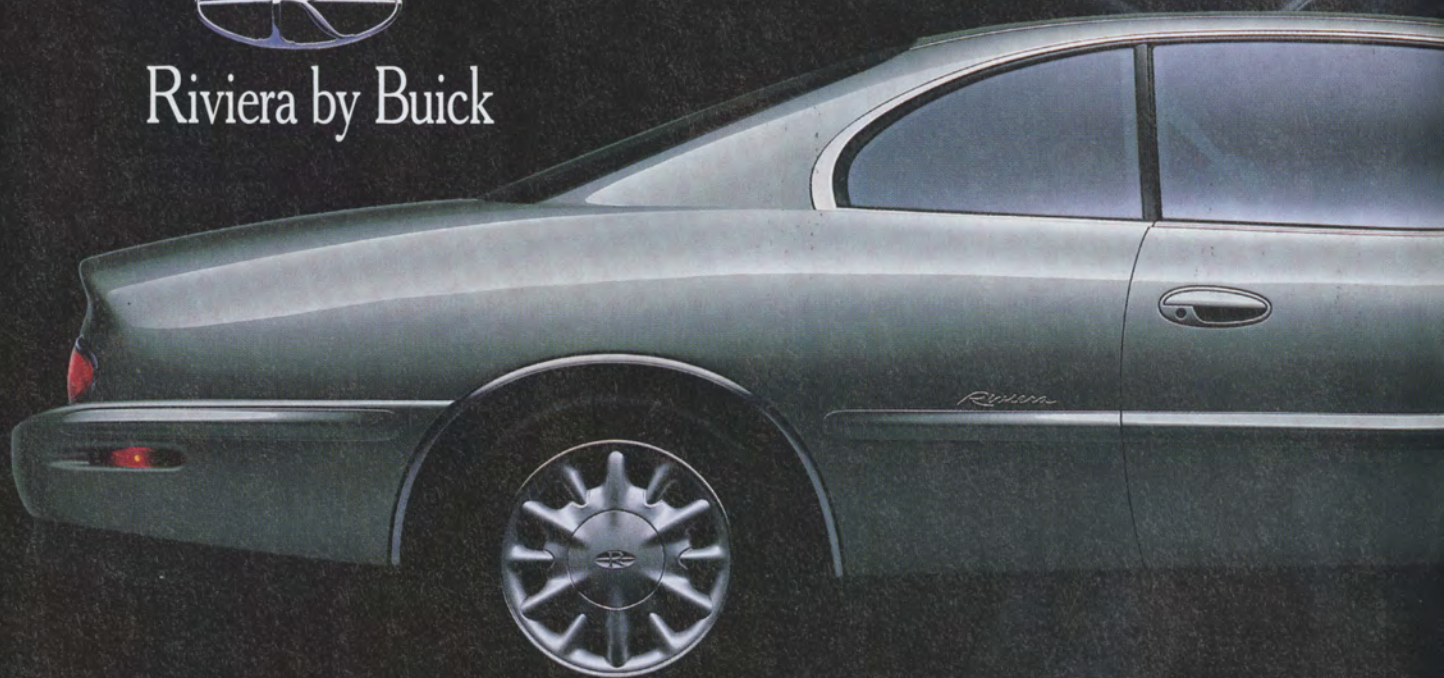
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San Francisco Opera Magazine
ISSN 0892-7189

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SAN FRANCISCO OPERA MAGAZINE

The Fiery Angel

1994 Season
Vol. 72, No. 6

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Strange history of the creation of the book on which *The Fiery Angel* is based, along with the troubled road to the opera's premiere.
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About the Kirov Opera and the Maryinsky Theater of St. Petersburg, Russia, and particularly about that company's driving spirit, conductor Valery Gergiev.

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Blake, William (1757-1827)
The Great Red Dragon and the Woman Clothed with the Sun, c.1805-10
Pen and ink with watercolor over graphite, 15 3/4 x 12 3/4 in.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

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On behalf of the Board of Directors, welcome to San Francisco Opera's exciting 1994 Fall Season—one that is particularly noteworthy for the Company both artistically (as you will read in our General Director's letter) and financially. Due to a remarkable team effort—highlighted by the success of a special Board campaign led by Finance Chairman William W. Godward, the reduction of expenses and increased income delivered by the Company's administrative staff, and a strong increase in individual giving—the Opera ended the 1993 performance year with a surplus of \$1.3 million. Still, there is much to do to eliminate the remaining deficit in the Opera's general fund. Our '93 success bodes well for the Company's future.

Positive news like this is due in great part to the generosity of the Opera's many benefactors, and it is a tremendous pleasure to acknowledge and thank them for their part in underwriting productions for the Fall Season. We must extend a special thank you to Lexus for its ongoing support, and particularly for sponsoring the 1994 *Lexus Summer Concerts*, which took San Francisco Opera to several Bay Area stages. And we gratefully acknowledge the invaluable contributions made by San Francisco Opera Guild, as well as the efforts of BRAVO! CLUB.

This year, our gifted resident designer, Gerard Howland, has created spectacular new sets for seven productions—significantly reducing our on-stage production costs without compromising the Company's high artistic standards. Support for the Resident Designer project affects the new productions of *Macbeth*, *The Dangerous Liaisons*, *Il Trovatore*, *Otello*, *Tannhäuser*, *Hérodiade* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and has been provided by the Columbia Foundation, Mrs. Sheldon G. Cooper, Mr. and Mrs. Reid W. Dennis, The L.J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation, and Mr. and Mrs. Marshall I. Wais.

The 1994 Fall Season opens with *Macbeth*, a production made possible by gifts from San Francisco Opera Guild and anonymous friends of San Francisco Opera. The world premiere of *The Dangerous Liaisons* has been made possible by gifts from the California Arts Council, the estate of Gilbert L. Gasch, the National Endowment for the Arts, Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Opera for a New America, and Mrs. Paul L. Wattis. The new production of *Il Trovatore* has been underwritten by gifts from the Franklin/Templeton Group of Funds and Mr. and Mrs. John R. Hamilton. The Company premiere of Rossini's *Otello* has been made possible by Sun Microsystems, Inc. Our *Tannhäuser* has been made possible by a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Evert B. Person. The Company's first production of *The Fiery Angel* has been made possible by a gift from The Edward Meade Smith Trust. *Mefistofele* has been made possible by The Bernard Osher Foundation. And the new *Lucia di Lammermoor* has been made possible by gifts from The Herman J. Miller and Edward J. Clarke Foundation, and from an anonymous friend in honor of William W. Godward.

We are always delighted to see new names appear on our roster of production sponsors, and look forward to enlarging that list with the names of more individuals, corporations and foundations who wish to enjoy the benefits and tremendous satisfaction of joining this special group.

Additionally, we gratefully acknowledge government funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, the California Arts Council, and the Grants for the Arts program of the San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund. Our sincere gratitude also goes out to Mayor Frank Jordan and Chief Administrative Officer Rudolf Nothenberg for their invaluable support; and to the War Memorial Board of Trustees, for their ongoing support and assistance.

Reid W. Dennis
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MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL DIRECTOR

LIEBERMAN



Welcome to the 1994 Fall Season at San Francisco Opera—our Company's 72nd consecutive season, and one that continues a rich operatic tradition that is recognized internationally. Nowhere in this country will you find a comparable treasury of great operas and new productions within a single season—and I am proud to say that this has become one of our hallmarks. Think of it, within the three-month period from September 9 to December 11, San Francisco Opera will present 67 performances of nine operas, including the world premiere of a major American opera, three Company premieres, and seven spectacular, new productions.

Our roster of singers features many of today's most exciting stars—including the much anticipated return of Plácido Domingo, who will sing his first Jean (John the Baptist) in the Company premiere of *Hérodiade*. Several artists will appear in important national and local debuts, and seven fine conductors will take the podium, headed by Donald Runnicles, now in his third season as the Opera's music director.

This past summer, audiences throughout the Bay Area had the unusual opportunity of hearing our marvelous Opera Orchestra, Chorus and guest soloists in several concerts at regional outdoor theaters—these were the acclaimed *Lexus Summer Concerts*. Under the baton of Maestro Runnicles, the ensembles also performed with the immensely gifted Adler Fellows from the San Francisco Opera Center in the exciting North American premiere of Michael Tippett's *King Priam* in four sold-out performances. Popular and critical praise for these summer productions was phenomenal, and confirms the reputation our orchestra, chorus and Opera Center have earned for being among the world's finest.

In 1992, San Francisco Opera commissioned *The Dangerous Liaisons*—with music by Conrad Susa, libretto by Philip Littell, and direction by Colin Graham—as part of our Pacific Visions program. This season's world premiere of the opera is a real "dream come true" for this Company. We recognize that the introduction of new and unusual operas to the repertoire is vital to this great art form, and we are proud to be pro-active in our commitment to bringing new work to the stage.

In that same light, the 1994 Fall Season also features an astounding first for this or any other company—seven new productions with sets designed by one artist. The difficult economic trials we experienced here and throughout California over the past several years created this innovative approach to producing opera. And through the very capable hands and imagination of Resident Designer Gerard Howland, you will see a new vision of grand opera—one that serves each individual production brilliantly.

From Verdi and Wagner to Prokofiev and Susa, this season will be a fantastic journey through the full range of human emotions and dramas—all presented with the high standards of excellence that have made San Francisco Opera one of the world's most respected opera companies. On behalf of our wonderful team at the Opera, I want to express special thanks to you—our loyal audience—for your ongoing and invaluable support in making all of this possible. Enjoy the season.

Lotfi Mansouri
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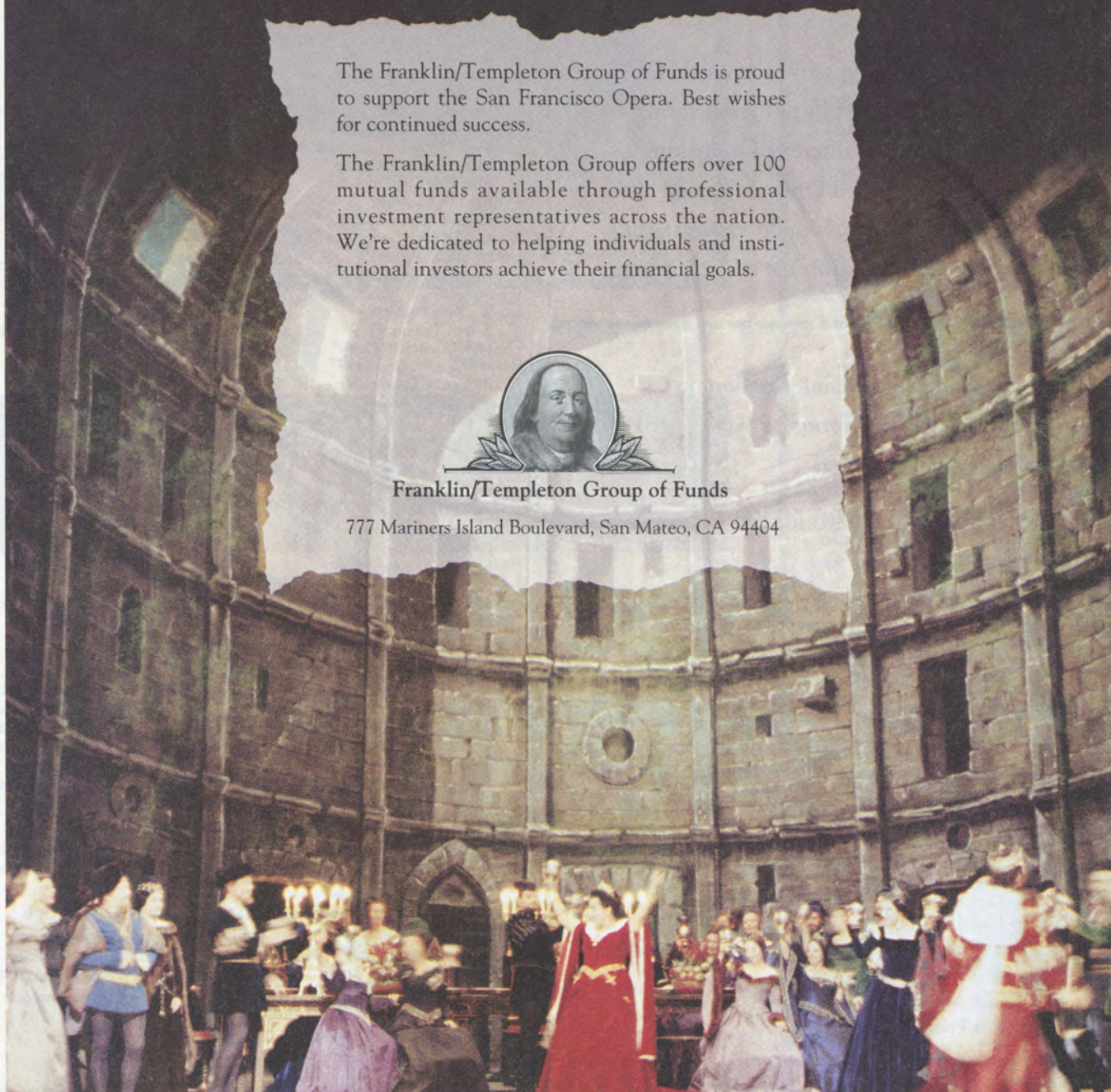
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TO CROSS THAT SACRED EDGE



By RICHARD TARUSKIN

Nina Petrovskaya, born in Moscow in 1884, was one of those writers who never write anything, but one without whom no literary movement is complete. Her name would have been forgotten by even the most intrepid historian of Russian symbolism were it not for her having been endowed, as the poet Vladislav Khodasevich put it, with a gift for living—and loving—out of all proportion to her gift for art. Half of literary Moscow was smitten with her, he wrote. Nor was it an unrequited passion, to judge by the number of Russian poets, great and small, whose lives became entangled with Petrovskaya's.

The least of them, perhaps, was the one she married, Sergei Krechetov (né Sokolov), a minor poet but, as head of the Gryphon publishing house, a major force in Moscow literary life. Among the poets Gryphon published was Andrei Bely (né Boris Bugayev, 1880-1934), who at the turn of the century was the leader of a young spiritualist faction known as the Argonauts. Petrovskaya joined this circle in 1903, became madly enamored of its charismatic, fiery-maned leader in whom she saw "a new Christ," and managed to awaken his interest in return—at first, as he later recollected, by virtue of her "special sensitivity" to his doctrine of "mysterical love," but eventually on a more ordinary level of human desire. Their physical liaison brought about a spiritual crisis—the "tragedy of sex," Bely called it—and within a year he fled from the demanding self-dramatizing Petrovskaya, exiling himself to the town of Nizhny Novgorod. For years thereafter, Bely would remain in a state of perpetual flight from "the gryphoness." For her part, Petrovskaya was locked in a state of perpetual agonized pursuit.

Unable to possess her "angel with demon's wings," Petrovskaya sought revenge in a liaison with his most potent rival, Valery Bryusov (1873-1924), the virtual founder of Russian symbolism, who in 1904 had reached his pinnacle as leader of the movement, and defender of its hegemony, when he assumed the editorship of the critical journal *Scales* (*Vesy*), its quasi-official organ. The next two years were a veritable pandemonium of passion, jealousy, spite and fury for all three points on this most celebrated of Russian literary love triangles. Bryusov described the period as one long "mental duel" with Bely. A student of the black arts, like many "decadents," he resorted to exorcisms—in which Bely, too, believed, and at which he took mortal fright. Bryusov had violent recurring dreams of bloody retribution that were later played out in poetry, and finally

challenged his antagonist to an actual "empirical" duel on a flimsy pretext. Bely refused the challenge, sending Bryusov instead a long, self-justifying letter, and also publishing a poem, "To an ancient enemy" (*Starinnomu vragu*), which Bryusov took as his final defeat in the "mental duel." In one last dream he saw himself mortally wounded by Bely, and woke up spiritually reconciled to his opponent. Bryusov's affair with Petrovskaya, who remained obsessed with Bely, lasted another five years, until 1911.

Incredible though it seems, it was while he was still living out the last, relatively peaceful, stage of his relationship with Petrovskaya that Bryusov committed the history of the whole stormy triangle to paper in a rather grandiose *roman à clef* which he published in *Vesy* in 1907-8. A true erudite who habitually titled works in Latin (*Tertia vigilia, Urbi et orbi*) and Greek (*Stephanos*), Bryusov cast *The Fiery Angel* (*Ognenniy angel*) as a "sixteenth-century romance" set in Renaissance Germany, where burgeoning humanism and a highly rationalized, scholastically elaborated occult lore uneasily coexisted. The novel's elaborate subtitle not only adds to the period flavor but amounts to a virtual synopsis:

"A True Story in which is related of the Devil, not once but often appearing in the Image of a Spirit of Light to a Maiden and seducing her to Various and Many Sinful Deeds, of Ungodly Practices of Magic, Alchymy, Astrology, the Cabalistical Sciences and Necromancy, of the Trial of the Said Maiden under the Presidency of His Eminence the Archbishop of Trier, as well as of Encounters and Discourses with the Knight and thrice Doctor Agrippa of Nettesheim, and with Doctor Faustus, composed by an Eyewitness."

The maiden, a strident hysteric named Renata, was obviously Nina Petrovskaya. The angelic/demonic title character—or at any rate his human manifestation (as Renata insists) in the form of blindingly blond Count Heinrich—was Bely's stand-in. Bryusov's persona was the "Eyewitness," a well-meaning, uncomprehending lansquenet named Ruprecht. The novel is cast in the form of Ruprecht's memoirs or confessions, enabling Bryusov to recount the story from his own first-person perspective.

Point for point, the main events of the novel parallel the real-life drama we have been revisiting, in both its waking and dreaming aspects—bearing in mind that in



Sergei Prokofiev, 1891-1953

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the novel, as in the lived experience, the two levels of existence are not clearly distinguished, and that Bryusov has somewhat idealized his own role and motives. In the novel's prehistory, revealed in flashbacks and narratives in dialogue, the radiant angel Madiel appears to the child Renata, and offers her the secrets of a mystical love; when her desire for him takes a physical turn, the angel dissolves in a fiery aureole, leaving her condemned to a life of mystical (for which read sexual) obsession. At the novel's actual beginning, Renata, possessed by spirits, meets Ruprecht and tells him how she came to be the way she

end of the novel as her then-lover Bryusov had conceived it, but no: in good symbolist style she began to live its last phases, even to the point of converting to Catholicism and taking the name Renata.

Bryusov's *Fiery Angel* is an engrossing novel. (It was published in 1930 in an English translation by Ivor Montagu and Sergei Nalbandov, and has been reprinted.) As with any good *roman à clef*, its biographical basis is not essential to its enjoyment or its comprehension as literature. Its dominant theme, abstracted from the author's sufferings and turned to potent artistic account, is the eternal symbolist theme, the relationship between levels of physical and spiritual existence. Its overriding purpose, for which the turbulent events of Bryusov's life merely provided the pretext, was (in the words of the novel's penultimate sentence) "to cross that sacred edge that divides our world from the dark sphere in which float spirits and demons" so as to explore metaphorically the ambiguities of reality and experience—and, ultimately, of morals.

* * *

It was simply as an engrossing novel that *The Fiery Angel* captured the imagination of Sergei Prokofiev, who read it in New York toward the end of the year 1919. He had no knowledge of those of its aspects that had made it the talk of literary Moscow a dozen years before; Russian musicians were as a rule amazingly aloof from avant-garde movements in the other media. It was just "one of the few really artistic Russian books" that came his way during his post-revolutionary sojourn in America (1918-22), a period dominated creatively by *The Love for Three Oranges*, an opera commissioned by the Chicago Opera and performed there in 1921. The idea of turning Bryusov's novel into an opera came virtually on the heels of completing the other in October of 1919. Precisely what it was that attracted him to the project emerged a few years later in correspondence with his close friend, the composer Nikolai Myaskovsky, who thought the novel somewhat "theological" for operatic treatment. "Of theology there is little in *The Fiery Angel*," Prokofiev wrote back, "but of orgies there's no end."

The main orgy was the one in the convent, and from the first Prokofiev saw that scene as the opera's inevitable culmination, toward which everything else must tend. As in the case of *The Love for Three Oranges* and its predecessor—*The Gambler*, after Dostoyevsky (1916)—Prokofiev began by

writing his own libretto, in prose. (In this he was following what might be called the "radical tradition" in Russian opera, stemming from the work, and in particular the theorizing, of the young Mussorgsky.) Whereas the novel, as a first-person narrative, inevitably centered on the author's surrogate, Ruprecht, Prokofiev's libretto overwhelmingly emphasized Renata, the possessed maiden. Her perpetual hysterics dominate every scene but two, making her role one of the longest and (in terms of range and volume) most demanding in opera.

The concentration on Renata entailed the sacrifice of a great deal of colorful action. Among the scenes eliminated were one of the orgies (Ruprecht's real-or-imagined attendance at a black mass), and even Ruprecht's duel with Count Heinrich, which was reduced in the opera to a tumultuous entr'acte between the two scenes of Act III. In compensation, Prokofiev hoped to gain what he saw as an operatic *sine qua non*—a "steady dramatic crescendo" building inexorably from Renata's hallucination in Act I to the shattering climax in the convent. The first draft of the scenario ended with Renata's death—its absence in the finished opera is often regretted by critics—but Prokofiev considered it anticlimactic and, in view of the presence of Faust and Mephistopheles in an earlier scene, too likely to remind audiences of the death of Marguerite in Gounod's overly familiar opera.

Ending at the high point, however crude a ploy by the standards of the well-made play or novel, was in any case an article of operatic faith with Prokofiev: "If the audience should doze off somewhere in the middle," he wrote to Myaskovsky, "at least they'll wake up for the final curtain." Dozing off was unlikely, though: on the way to the final curtain there would be the harrowing and orchestrally extravagant spirit conjuration, the gruesome confrontation with Agrippa and (Prokofiev's ides) his trio of skeletons, the earsplitting "duel" entr'acte, the burlesque of Faust and Mephistopheles, and—the main thing—a mounting group of three maddening confrontations between the impossible Renata, ever-obstinate yet ever-changeable, and the long-suffering Ruprecht, marvelously described by the critic Conrad L. Osborne as "the all-time Man Who Won't Take No for an Answer."

After a very quick start—the first act was completed in piano score by March of 1920—work on the opera soon bogged down owing to its pianist-composer's heavy concert schedule. Having accumu-



Valery Bryusov (1873-1924) as a young man, and as the subject of a postage stamp issued in 1973 on the occasion of the centenary of his birth.

is; Ruprecht falls in love with the deranged girl and selflessly commits himself to abetting her quest of Madiel with "cabalistical sciences and necromancy." Renata spies Count Heinrich and knows him for Madiel's incarnation. When he hides from her, she sends Ruprecht after him to demand satisfaction. The two men fight a duel in which Ruprecht is all but mortally wounded. Renata tends to Ruprecht's convalescence; they live for a time as a happy couple, but she finally leaves him. For this last event, Bryusov relied on (accurate) prophesy rather than recollection. He continued, in fantasy, to have Renata join a convent and infect the nuns with her hysteria. She is condemned as a witch and burned at the stake. In the novel's final scenes, Ruprecht encounters Heinrich after Renata's death and is reconciled with his old rival. One might easily imagine Nina Petrovskaya shocked or humiliated by the



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lated sufficient funds from his performance fees, Prokofiev retreated in March of 1922 to Ettal, a town near Oberammergau in the Bavarian Alps, so as to devote full time to the opera in a location congruent with its setting. He managed to complete the vocal score before the end of the next year. The work is cast in a naturalistic declamatory idiom similar to *The Gambler's*, except that far greater reliance is placed on a conventional network of orchestral (and, occasionally, vocal) leitmotives. There are three main ones, apparently corresponding to the three main characters, and they all make their appearance in the scene first sketched in 1920. The obtuse Ruprecht's, a suitable blunt cadential phrase, is heard at the very outset. The obsessive Renata's is a patently Stravinskian ostinato that provides the background to practically her whole immense role. The only fully developed melody among the opera's leitmotives—indeed, practically the only lyrical melody in the entire score—is the theme presumably associated with Madiel (though Myaskovsky interpreted it as the “love theme,” and in a perhaps hasty passage in his autobiography Prokofiev called it the “Renata theme”). It is a purely diatonic tune that was originally intended for a “white-key” quartet Prokofiev sketched on board a Pacific steamer en route from Japan to San Francisco in 1918.

In addition, there are several extended monologues for Renata which make an effect comparable to that of a traditional operatic *scena*, if not an aria. In these monologues, and also in some of the minor roles (e.g., the Innkeeper in Act I), Prokofiev makes telling use of a clever “lyricalizing” technique he had pioneered in his long narrative setting of Andersen's *The Ugly Duckling* (Op. 18, 1914), in which a characteristic pitch sequence acts as a sort of “melodic mold” into which just about any line of prose can be poured by observing “Mussorgskian” rules of good Russian declamation.

For all these reasons, *The Fiery Angel* makes nothing like the provocatively “anti-operatic” impression Prokofiev deliberately created in *The Gambler*. Despite its superficially modernistic style and the absence of conventional numbers, the later work is no avant-garde esthetic gauntlet but a magnificently effective, superbly ambitious score that exhibits many of the traditional grand-operatic virtues, even if it hardly crosses any sacred edge. Prokofiev looked forward to having it both ways: he expected his new opera not only to confirm

his reputation as a leader of international modernism but also to establish him as a reigning genius of the lyric stage.

* * *

It did not quite turn out that way. So far from accomplishing his objectives, *The Fiery Angel* was unquestionably the greatest fiasco of Prokofiev's career, one from which it is fair to say he never fully recovered. One after another envisioned, even promised, productions failed to materialize, beginning with a 1925 proposal by Albert Wolff to stage the work at the Opéra-Comique in Paris, where Prokofiev was by then living. (The plan fell through when Wolff lost his post as the theater's director.)

Next, Bruno Walter accepted *The Fiery Angel* for production at the Städtische Oper in Berlin, where *The Love for Three Oranges* had had a great success. In the summer of 1926, Prokofiev signed a contract for the 1927-28 season, and had to orchestrate the opera in a great hurry. He managed this task by devising a labor-saving system he

used for the rest of his life: he would work up a “particell” or “short score” — meaning an extended piano score on several staves, with detailed indications of instrumentation — and leave the job of actually writing out the full score to a paid assistant. (In 1926-27, that assistant was a Russian music student named Georgiy Nikolayevich Gorchakov; later, in the Soviet Union, the role was reserved to the distinguished music scholar Pavel Lamm.) Even so, Prokofiev complained that “this accursed creature has worn me down completely; I have to check over score pages with 36 staves and crawl through two measures per day, gnashing my teeth all the while.” Despite all his efforts and ingenuity, he did not finish the orchestration until September of 1927. He had missed his deadline, and the Städtische Oper cancelled the production.

When the Metropolitan Opera expressed interest in the score in 1930, Prokofiev undertook a revision that would have made for an expanded scenario, closer to Bryusov's original conception; but negotiations with the Met never got past the stage of desultory agreement-in-principle, and the additional scenes were never written (they exist only in a list of planned revisions now in a Moscow archive).

Meanwhile, the second act — minus the scene with Jacob Glock and (incredibly) without the all-important *séance* — was performed on June 14, 1928, at a Paris concert under Serge Koussevitzky, who as the opera's publisher had a vested interest in its promotion. Nina Koshets sang Renata; the program also included the premiere of Symphony No. 1 by Vladimir Dukelsky (later known as Vernon Duke) and the suite from Rimsky-Korsakov's opera *The Maid of Pskov*. Prokofiev described the occasion in a letter to Myaskovsky. Though he put a brave and characteristically jocular face on it, it is clear that he found the opera's reception troubling—and with good reason. “It had a great success, though the local listeners received it in a fairly superficial way,” he wrote, adding ominously that “the Diaghilev party took a hostile attitude toward it.” At the same time, “there was a comical turn of events as well: [Leonid] Sabaneyev and [Alexander] Grechaninov came up to me and began singing the act's praises. At this I became rather ashamed and decided that the piece was perhaps mediocre after all.”

Not mediocre, surely, but decidedly old-fashioned. The antipathy of the

continued on page 58



Four scenes from San Francisco Opera's first staging of a Prokofiev opera: 1991's *War and Peace*. (Above) Barry McCauley as Pierre; (opposite) Ann Panagulias as Natasha and Irina Bogachova as Maria Akhrosimova; Valery Alexeiev as Napoleon; Ann Panagulias as Natasha and Dimitri Kharitonov as Prince Andrei. San Francisco Opera's Prokofiev experiences will continue in 1995 with the presentation of *Opéra de Lyon's The Love for Three Oranges*.



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The Fiery Angel (in Russian)

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Valery Gergiev

Alexander Polianichko** (10/21)

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David Freeman*

Designer

David Roger*

Lighting Designer

Thomas J. Munn

Assistant to David Freeman

Robert Chevara**

Chorus Director

Ian Robertson

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Valery Ryvkin

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First performance:

(Concert) Paris, November 25, 1954

(Staged) Venice, September 29, 1955

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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5 AT 8:00

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9 AT 8:00

CAST (in order of appearance)

<i>Hostess of the Inn</i>	Donna Petersen
<i>Ruprecht</i>	Sergei Leiferkus
<i>Renata</i>	Galina Gorchakova*
<i>Peasant</i>	Scott Wilde
<i>Fortuneteller</i>	Larissa Diadkova*
<i>Jacob Glock</i>	Matthew Lord
<i>Agrippa von Nettesheim</i>	Grier Hanedanyan
<i>Count Heinrich</i>	Larry Henderson
<i>Mathias</i>	Eduardo del Campot
<i>Angelika, the Indian</i>	Abigail Crain
<i>The Doctor</i>	Earle Patriarcot
<i>Mephistopheles</i>	Konstantin Pluzhnikov*
<i>Faust</i>	Daniel Sumegit
<i>Cologne Innkeeper</i>	Steven Condy
<i>A Servant Boy</i>	Artem Malkov
<i>Three Neighbors</i>	Chester Pattont, Valery Portnov, Scott Wilde
<i>Mother Superior</i>	Larissa Diadkova
<i>The Inquisitor</i>	Bulat Minzhilkiev*
<i>Two Young Nuns</i>	Kristin Claytont, Tatiana Filimonova*
<i>Nuns</i>	Deanna Barraza, Elizabeth Bishop†, Trudy Ellen Craney*, Pamela Dillard, Man-Hua Gao, Mika Shigematsut

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ACT I An inn

ACT II Scene 1 A room in Cologne

Scene 2 Agrippa's study

INTERMISSION

ACT III Scene 1 A street outside Count Heinrich's house

Scene 2 A clearing in a forest

ACT IV A square in Cologne

ACT V A convent

Supertitles by Christopher Bergen, San Francisco Opera.

*Latecomers will not be seated during the performance after the lights have dimmed.
The use of cameras, cellular phones and any kind of recording equipment is strictly forbidden.
The performance will last approximately two and one-half hours.*

The Fiery Angel/Synopsis

ACT I—Ruprecht, a mercenary soldier, has returned from several years in the Spanish colonies of America and has taken lodgings at an inn. His rest is disturbed by the cries of a woman in the next room. He breaks down the door and finds Renata. She is possessed by spirits, and she instantly and inexplicably recognizes him. Ruprecht says a Latin prayer which causes the spirits, invisible to all but Renata, to withdraw. After her vision subsides, she tells Ruprecht her story. During her childhood, she had a secret companion, Madiel, her Fiery Angel, who appeared to her in various guises—as a golden butterfly, a glowing ember, or a yellow flower. He taught her to remain pure, because one day she would become a saint. In order to prepare herself, Madiel made her fast, lash her back and tear her breasts with thorns. When she grew up to be 16, she felt a burning passion for this supernatural being, and implored him to become her lover. The angel turned indignant at the suggestion and disappeared, announcing that he would return in the guise of an ordinary mortal. Renata believed she recognized him in Count Heinrich, with whom she lived happily for a year before he abandoned her. Since then, she has wandered, obsessed by visions, in search of the Count whose likeness might conceal her beloved Madiel. Her story is interrupted by the Hostess of the Inn, who warns Ruprecht that Renata is a mad woman who has bewitched Heinrich and tormented the villagers, and she asks that Renata leave the inn. Ruprecht is strangely fascinated by Renata. His attempt at rape is not successful. A fortuneteller, reading her future, sees blood on Renata's clothes and Ruprecht, increasingly obsessed with Renata, takes her with him and tells her he will join her in her search for the Fiery Angel.

ACT II—Scene 1—In Cologne, Renata consults a book on magic, while Ruprecht complains of her continuous and futile quest for Heinrich. After receiving some magic manuscripts from the bookseller Jacob Glock, she conjures up demon spirits, in hopes of finding out where Heinrich is. On Glock's advice, Ruprecht decides to consult Agrippa, the alchemist.

Scene 2—In Agrippa's study, the magician refuses to help him, saying he is against the practice of occult sciences. Three skeletons deny his statements.

INTERMISSION

ACT III—Scene 1—Renata has found Heinrich. She is outside of his house, having been driven out by him and accused of being possessed by the devil. She asks Ruprecht to kill him, for she no longer recognizes the Count as her Madiel, but as a plain seducer. Ruprecht hesitates, but eventually challenges Heinrich to a duel. Suddenly, however, Renata sees above her on a balcony Count Heinrich arguing with Ruprecht and again projects onto him the identity of Madiel. Shaken by the reappearance of the Fiery Angel, she tells Ruprecht he must not hurt Heinrich in the duel.

Scene 2—Ruprecht, unable to fight fairly with Heinrich, is badly wounded. His friend and second for the duel, Mathias, goes to find a doctor, leaving Renata to look after Ruprecht, who is close to death. Ruprecht, hallucinating, imagines his South American Indian wife Angelika. An invisible chorus ironically comments on Renata's declarations of love for Ruprecht, while Mathias brings in a doctor, determined to save Ruprecht's life.

ACT IV—Back in Cologne, Renata is shaken by remorse and determined to leave the convalescing Ruprecht in order to enter a convent. During an argument between the lovers, Faust and Mephistopheles appear. After terrorizing the innkeeper with diabolical wonders, Mephistopheles, always interested in troubled souls, invites Ruprecht to join Faust and himself on their journey the next day.

ACT V—In the basement of a convent, the Inquisitor, summoned by the Mother Superior, prepares to interrogate Renata. Ever since Renata entered the convent, there has been no peace and the nuns have been perturbed by sinister visions. The Inquisitor's attempts at exorcism fail and Renata, feeling unjustly accused, rails against him, accusing him of being an instrument of the devil. The nuns start dancing around in a possessed frenzy. The horrified Ruprecht arrives at the upper gallery with Mephistopheles and Faust. The Inquisitor accuses Renata of witchcraft and condemns her to be tortured and burned at the stake.

The performance of October 27th is sponsored by American Airlines.

The performance of October 30th is sponsored by Heath Cal.

The performance of November 1st is designated in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Myron Du Bain's membership in the Triple Gold Circle.

St. Petersburg Maryinsky Theater Acrobatic Troupe (*Spirits*)

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Evgeni Dimitriev
Rusdem Dzhoraev

Vladimir Khaletski
Alexei Kopyev-Nikolaev

Dmitri Kryutchenko
Gennadi Nikolaev

Igor Senchenkov
Alexander Tolstikov

Andrei Vetrov
Alexander Volkov

Mimes (*Dogs*): Marc Bauman, Ian Mishkin, Louis Schilling

Supernumeraries

Nuns:

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Alexis Gordon
Kristin Graham
Naomi Hartley-Dawson
Kristin Lemberg

Jennifer Minore
Misha Myers
Elizabeth Palomeque
Crimson Rose
Elizabeth Solomon

Soldiers:

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Walter Blumst
Peter Cannon
Daniel Daniloff
Jim Dyvad
Eugenio Gamez
Frank Glennon
Bruce Jewett

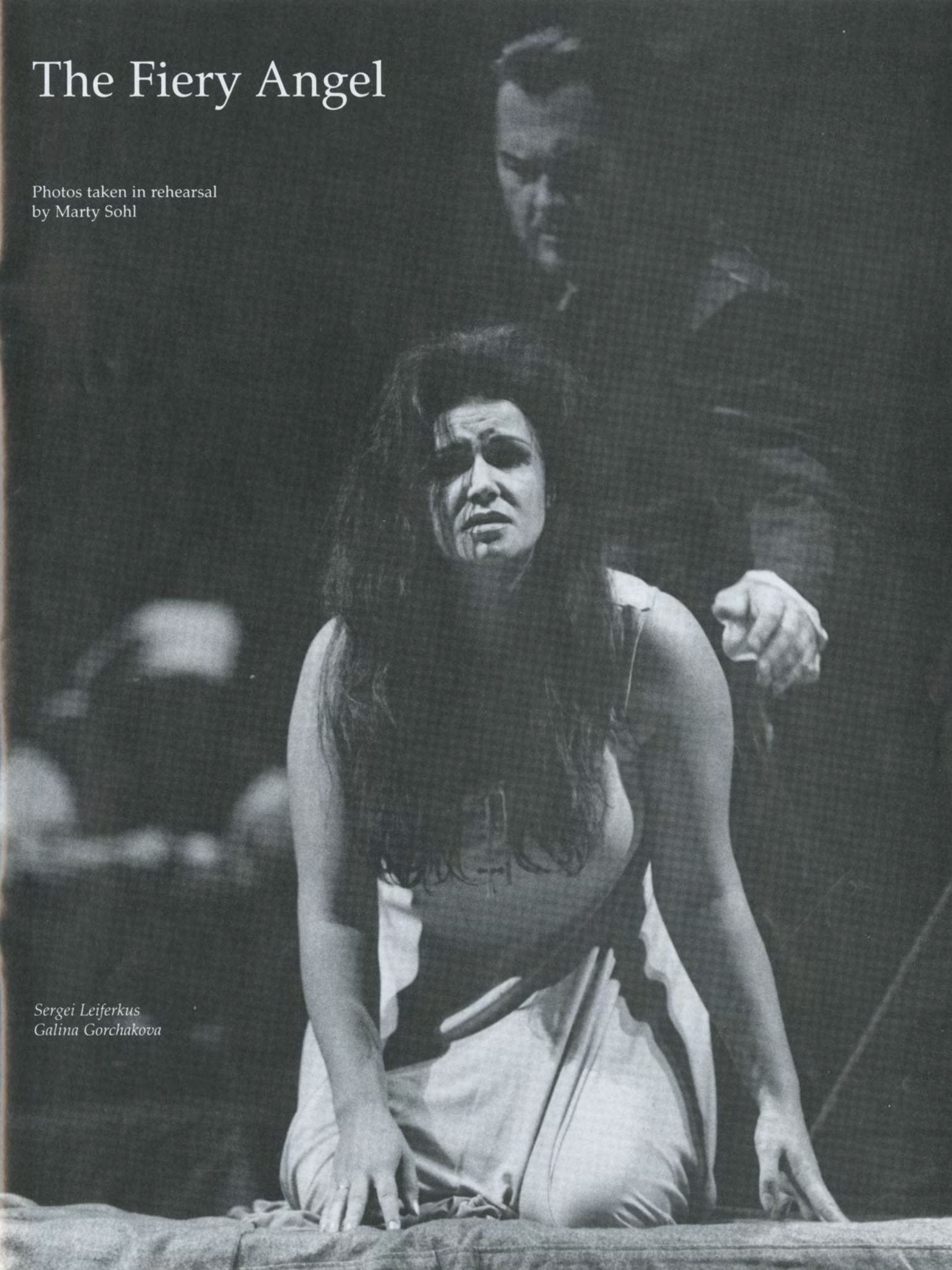
Frank Jorgensen
M.T. Kildow
Leonid Kolesnitchenko
Ken Korpi
Jim Mullins
Ciaran O'Sullivan
William F. Perasso
John Plotz

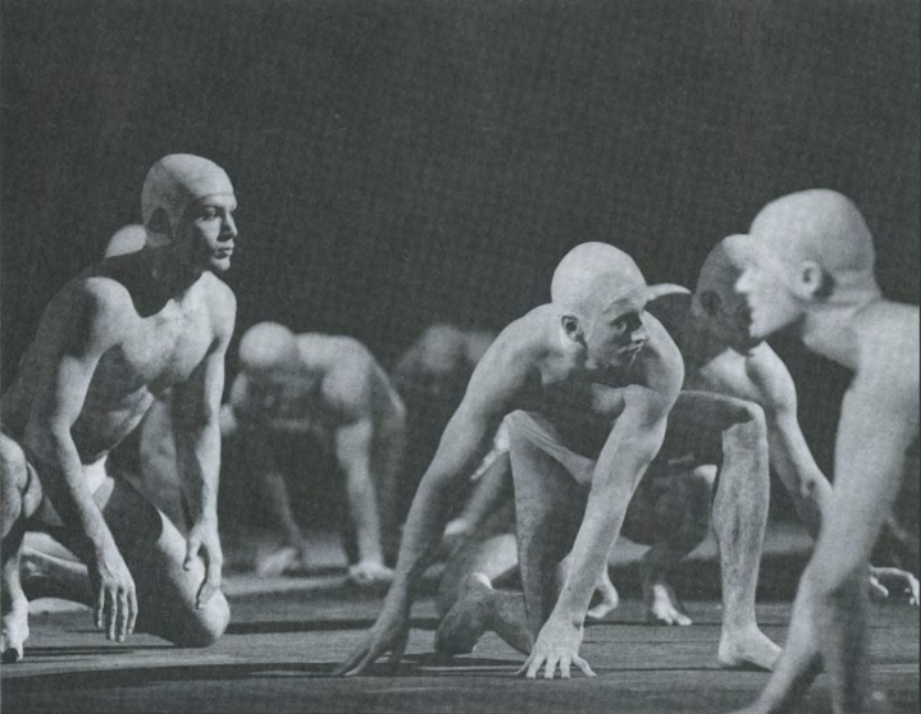
Michael Lucas Rebston
Paul Ricks
Jim Shields
Stanley Strosser
Bradlee Frierott
Don Stoddard
Michael Strickland
Noe Zavala

The Fiery Angel

Photos taken in rehearsal
by Marty Sohl

*Sergei Leiferkus
Galina Gorchakova*





Galina Gorchakova, Sergei Leiferkus

Galina Gorchakova





Donna Petersen, Sergei Leiferkus, Scott Wilde

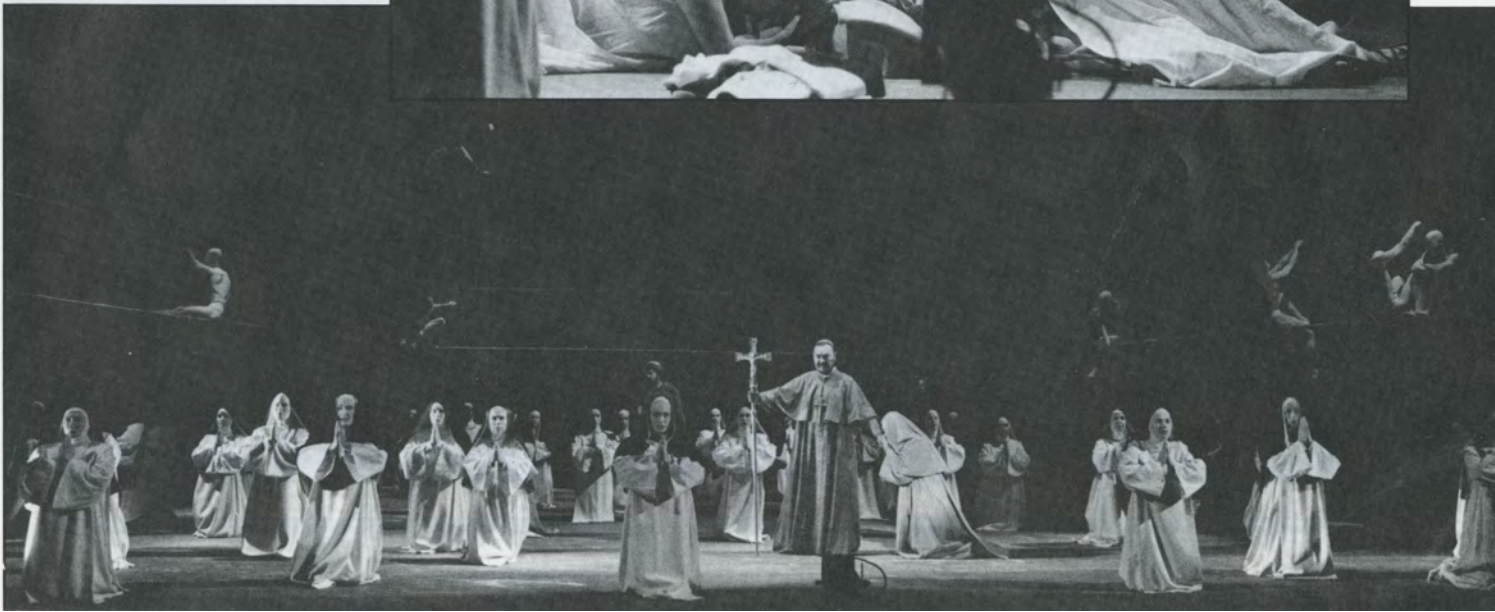


Larissa Diadkova



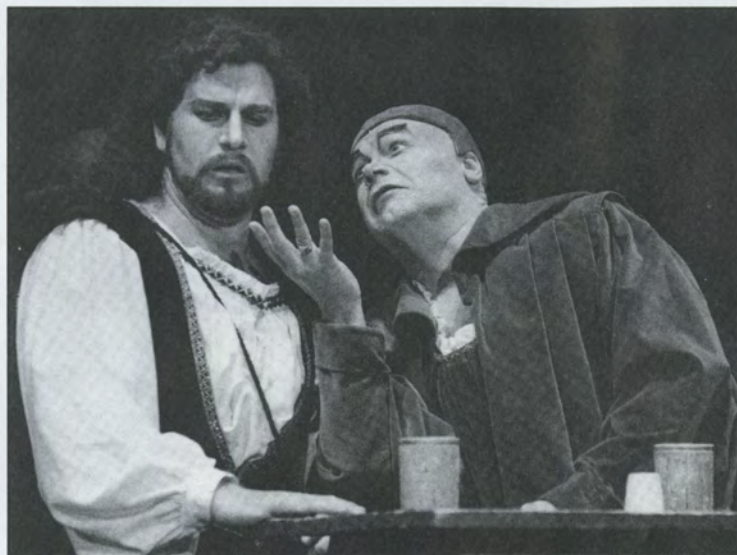
Galina Gorchakova

*Bulat Minzhilkiev, Women of the
San Francisco Opera Chorus,
Supernumeraries*





Galina Gorchakova, Sergei Leiferkus

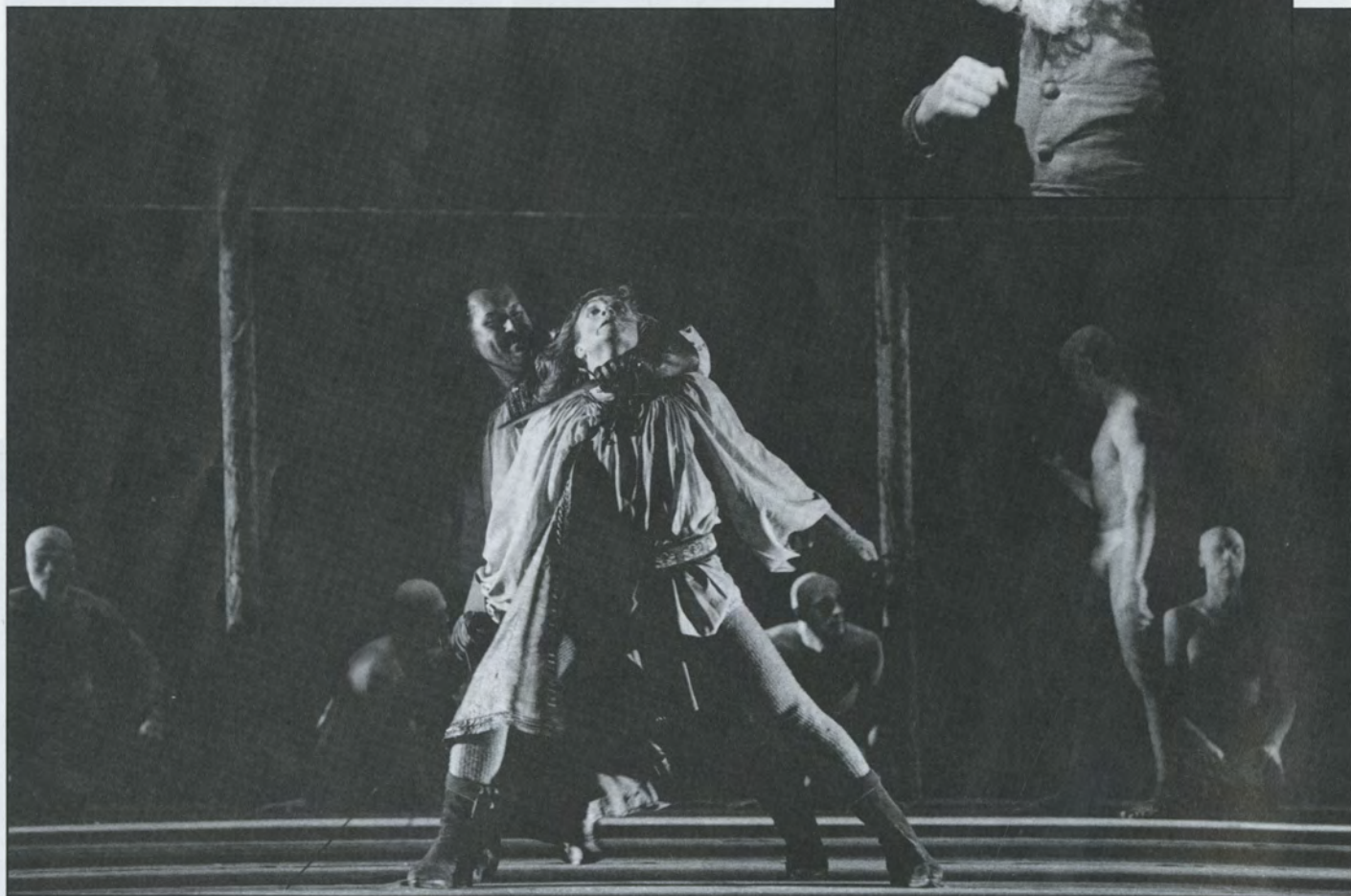


Daniel Sumegi, Konstantin Pluzhnikov

Grier Hanedanyan



Duel Scene: Sergei Leiferkus, Larry Henderson



L.A. OPERA

1994-95 SEASON



SEPT. 9, 11, 16, 18M, 21, 24, 28, 1994

FAUST

Charles Gounod
New Production
Foster: Corsaro, Colavecchia,
Brown, Dana, Hickey
Villaruel, Silvasti, Tumanyan, Gilfry,
Guzman, Howe, Fitzpatrick

SEPTEMBER 10, 13, 17M, 20, 23, 1994

ELEKTRA

Richard Strauss
Behr: Pountney, West, Bury, Dana
Zschau, Voss, Rysanek, Mack,
Bernstein, Lebherz, Gallup, Ebbers,
Leighton, Howe, Nikkel, Guzman,
Roderer, Burzynski, Rashkovsky, Tash,
Curtsinger, Wallace

SEPT. 27, 30, OCT. 2, 5, 8M, 11, 14, 1994

DON GIOVANNI

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Foster: Miller, Stone, Israel, Dana, Hickey
Kozlowska, Rasmussen, Allen (9/27,
30; 10/2, 5, 8m) / Gilfry (10/11, 14),
Randle, Plishka, Atkins, Lebherz

PHOTO: JUNE ANDERSON

OCT. 29, NOV. 2, 5M, 8, 12, 1994

XERXES

George Frideric Handel
Brydon: Wadsworth, Lynch,
Pakledinaz, Kaczorowski
Hunt, Bradley, Waters, Rasmussen,
Asawa, Atkins, Opalach

FEBRUARY 4, 7, 10, 12, 1995

PELLÉAS ET MÉLISANDE

Claude Debussy
Salonen: Sellars, Tsypin, Ramicova, Ingalls
Groop, Le Roux, White, Cox, Wallis,
Le Roi, Atkins, Fitzpatrick
In association with the Los Angeles
Philharmonic

MARCH 18M, 21, 23, 26, 29, APRIL 1M, 1995

DON PASQUALE

Gaetano Donizetti
Pidò: Lawless, Ponnelle, Pyant
Čako, Desderi (3/18m-29)/
Gallup (4/1m), Fedderly,
Gilfry, Walker

MAY 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 20M, 23, 1995

OTELLO

Giuseppe Verdi
Behr: Friedrich, Harlan,
Schneider-Siemssen, Skalik
Anderson, Domingo
(5/6, 9, 12, 15, 18)/
Bogachov (5/20m, 23),
Yurisich, Rasmussen,
Fedderly, Lebherz, Ebbers,
Bernstein, Fitzpatrick

JUNE 7, 8, 9, 10M, 10E, 11, 13,
14, 15, 16, 17M, 17E, 18M, 1995

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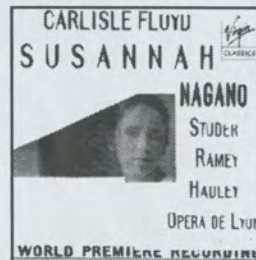
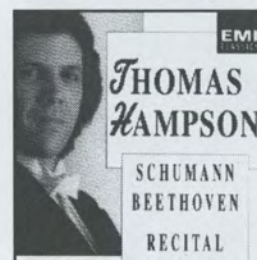
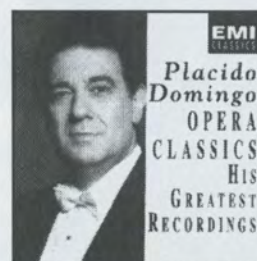
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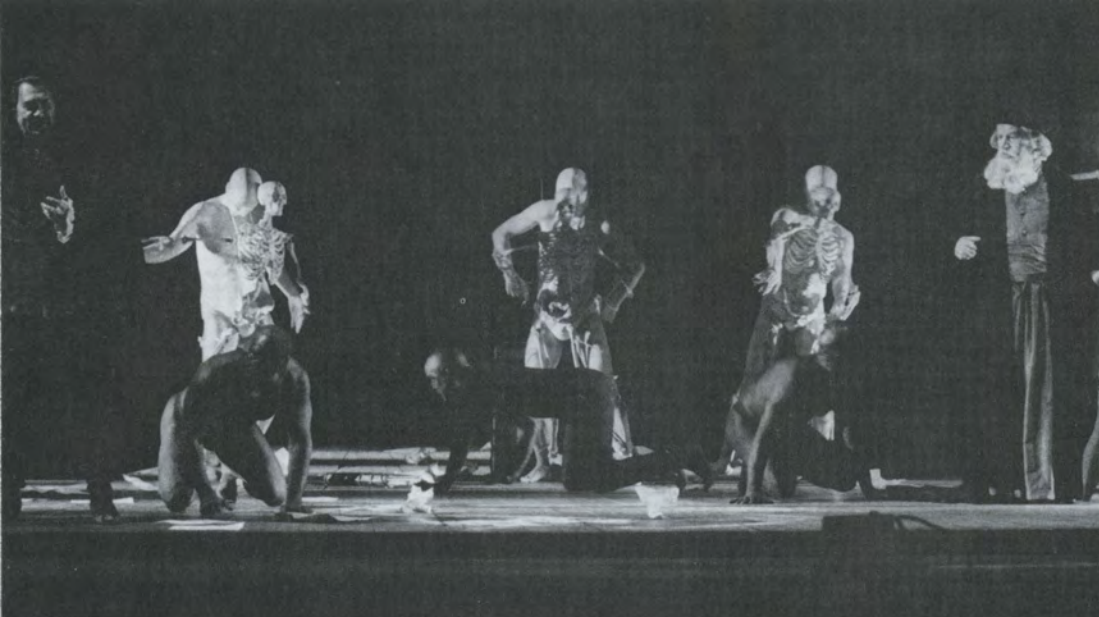


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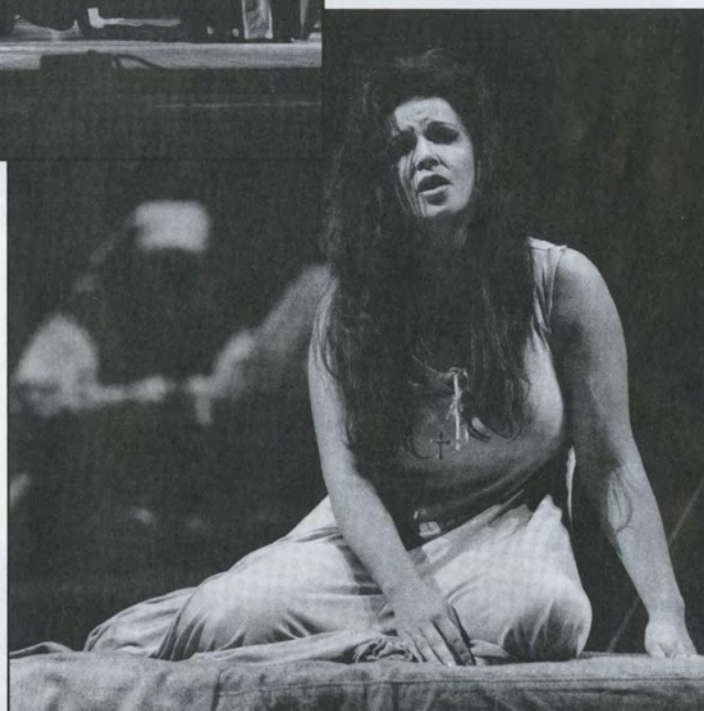
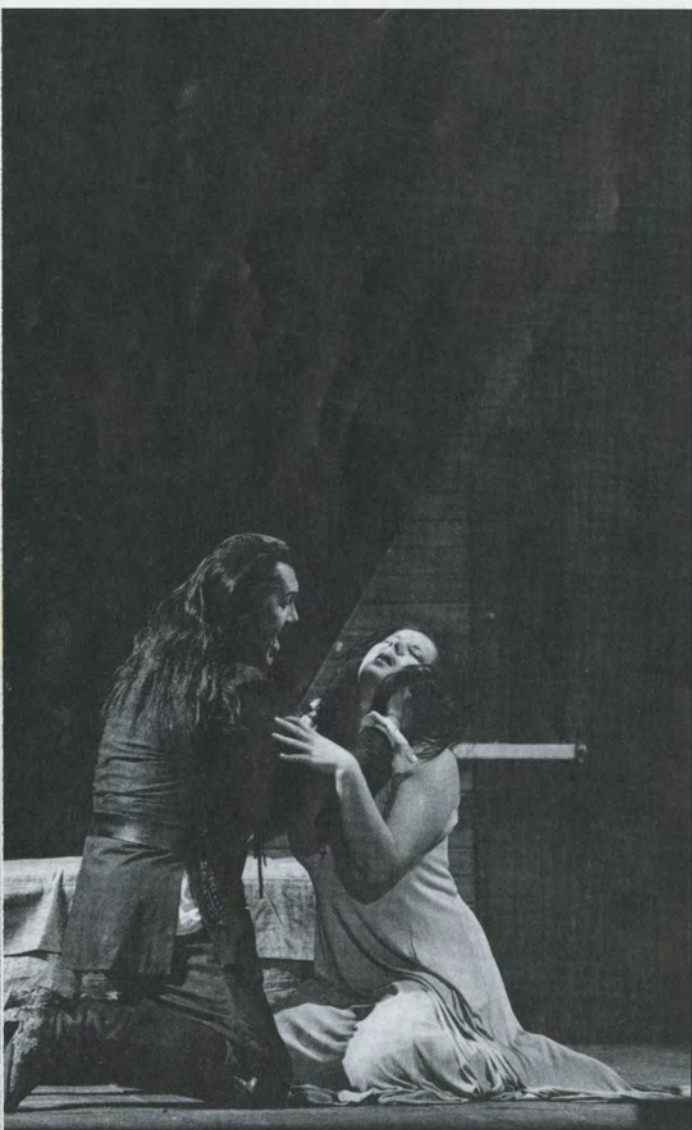
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*Sergei Leiferkus (left);
Grier Hanedanyan (right);
Skeletons: Vladimir Khaletski,
Alexei Kopyev-Nikolaev, Gennadi
Nikolaev; Dogs: Marc Bauman,
Ian Mishkin, Louis Schilling*

Sergei Leiferkus, Galina Gorchakova



Galina Gorchakova



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Donald C. Runnicles, *Music Director*

Opening Night New Production

Macbeth Verdi
Jones, Waite*†; Morris, Lloyd, Li,
Guggenheim, Del Campo*†, Wilde,
Patton†
Runnicles; Mansouri/Howland/
Pizzi/Whitfield
*This production is made possible by generous
gifts from San Francisco Opera Guild and
anonymous friends of San Francisco Opera.*
Sept. 9, 13, 16, 20, 24, 29, Oct. 2

World Premiere

The Dangerous Liaisons Sosa/Littell
Von Stade, Fleming, Mills, Meier*,
Forst, Claycomb, Bishop*†, Clayton*†,
Dillard*, Gao, Shigematsu†;
Hampson, Hobson**, Vasquez, Sikon*,
Lord*, Cross*, Portilla*†, Patriarco†
Runnicles; Graham*/Howland/Munn
*This production is made possible by generous
gifts from the California Arts Council, the
estate of Gilbert L. Gasch, the National
Endowment for the Arts, the Lila Wallace -
Reader's Digest Opera for a New America,
and Mrs. Paul L. Wattis.*
Sept. 10, 15, 18, 21, 23, 27

New Production

Il Trovatore Verdi
Millo/TBA, Zajick/Toczyska,
Bishop†; Armiliato*/O'Neill,
Gavanelli/Chernov, Wells/Skinner,
Guggenheim, Sumegit, Portilla†
Oren/Robertson; Copley/Howland/Munn
*This production is made possible by generous
gifts from the Franklin/ Templeton Group of
Funds and Mr. and Mrs. John R. Hamilton.*
Sept. 17, 22, 25, 28, Oct. 1, 6, 11
Dec. 1, 4, 7, 10

New Production

San Francisco Opera Premiere
Otello Rossini
Gasdia, Shigematsu†; Merritt, Estep,
Ford*, Langan, Cross, Li, Portilla†
Summers; Feldman/Howland/Brown/
Munn
*This production is made possible by a generous
gift from Sun Microsystems, Inc.*
Oct. 4, 9, 13, 18, 22, 25, 28

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Foundation, Mrs. Sheldon G. Cooper, Mr.
and Mrs. Reid W. Dennis, The L.J. and
Mary C. Skaggs Foundation, and Mr. and
Mrs. Marshall I. Wais.*

New Production

Tannhäuser Wagner
Voigt, Keen, Dillard; Schmidt*,
Hynninen, von Halem*, Sumegit,
Guggenheim, Rideout, Wilde
Runnicles; Mansouri/Smuin/Howland/
Mahoney/Munn
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Oct. 12, 15, 20, 23, 26, 29, Nov. 2



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San Francisco Opera Premiere

The Fiery Angel Prokofiev
Gorchakova*, Diadkova*, Petersen,
Clayton, Filimonova*, Waite†, Gao,
Bishop†, Dillard, Shigematsu†;
Leiferkus, Hanedanyan, Pluzhnikov*,
Minzhilkiev*, Lord, Wilde, Sumegit,
Del Campo†, Patriarco†, Condy
Gergiev/Polianichko** (10/21);
Freeman*/Roger*/Munn
Produced in association with the Royal
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and the Kirov Opera, St. Petersburg.
*Production is made possible, in part, by
contributions from The Friends of Covent
Garden and the British Council.*
*The San Francisco Opera production is made
possible by a generous gift from The Edward
Meade Smith Trust.*
Oct. 19, 21, 27, 30, Nov. 1, 5, 9

New Production

San Francisco Opera Premiere
Hérodiade Massenet
Zajick, Fleming, Clayton†;
Domingo/Keyes*(11/23, 25), Pons,
Cox, Vasquez, Del Campo†, Portilla†
Gergiev/Ethuin* (11/23, 25);
Mansouri/Howland/Walek/Munn
Nov. 8, 12, 15, 18, 20, 23, 25

Mefistofele

Boito
Millo/Racette, Neblett, Christin,
Bishop†; Ramey, Margison, Frank,
Cross
Pappano; Carsen/McClintock/
Morgan/Levine/Munn
Co-production with the Grand Théâtre
de Genève. Co-owned with the Lyric
Opera of Chicago.
*This production is made possible by a generous
gift from The Bernard Osher Foundation.*
Nov. 13, 16, 21, 27, 30, Dec. 3, 6, 9

New Production

Lucia di Lammermoor Donizetti
Swenson, Shigematsu†; Giordani,
Servile**, Miles, Lord, Portilla†
Santi; Bernhard/Howland/Toms/Munn
*This production is made possible by generous
gifts from The Herman J. Miller and Edward J.
Clarke Foundation and from an anonymous
friend in honor of William W. Godward.*
Nov. 19, 22, 26, 29, Dec. 2, 8, 11

* San Francisco Opera debut
** U.S. opera debut
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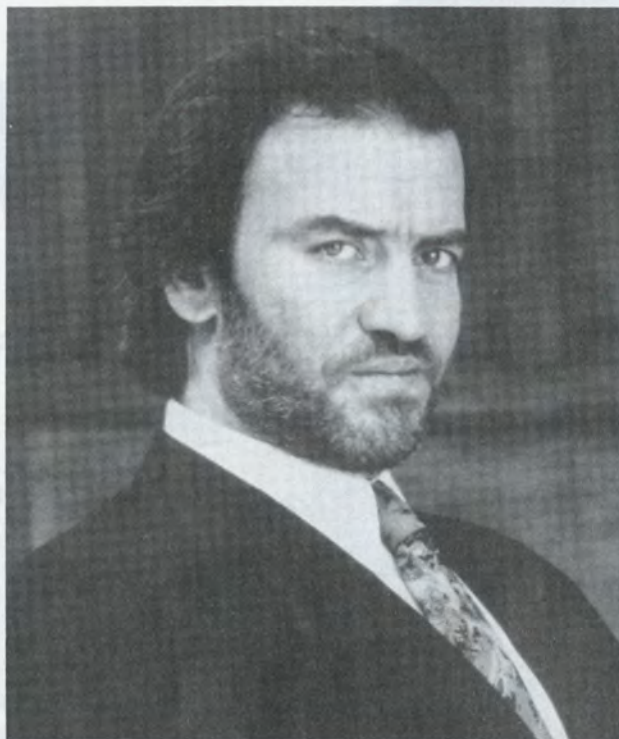
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Performance Highlights

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Valery Gergiev (above) conducts Prokofiev's *The Fiery Angel* at San Francisco Opera, and the Kirov Orchestra of St. Petersburg at Davies Symphony Hall; *Home*, by David Storey (below) opens at the American Conservatory Theater

Soprano **Deborah Voigt** stars as Elisabeth in **San Francisco Opera's** new production of *Tannhäuser*, which opens on October 12 and has additional performances on October 15, 20, 23, 26, and 29, and November 2. This marks another step in Voigt's journey through the Wagner canon, the latest being a triumphant appearance as Senta in Metropolitan Opera's concert performances of *The Flying Dutchman* in Frankfurt. The singer's current espousal of the German repertoire extends to a solo recital at the Herbst Theatre on October 31, where she also performs some Wagner—the *Wesendonk Lieder*—along with songs by Mascagni, Brahms, Strauss, and Charles Tomlinson Griffes. All proceeds benefit the San Francisco Opera Center, of whose training programs for young singers Voigt was once a member. Meanwhile, the SFO continues its collaboration with the Kirov Opera and the Maryinski Theater of St. Petersburg with a production of Prokofiev's *The Fiery Angel*. Kirov Opera music director Valery Gergiev conducts a cast that includes Galina Gorchakova as Renata and Sergei Leiferkus as Ruprecht. Performances are on October 19, 21, 27, 30, and November 1, 5, 9.

As part of the **San Francisco Symphony's** Great Performer Series, the **Kirov Orchestra of St. Petersburg** comes to Davies Symphony Hall on October 4 for an evening of all-Russian music: Rimsky-Korsakov's Suite from *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh*, Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 5 with soloist Alexander Toradze, and Stravinsky's *The Firebird*, performed under the baton of the busy Maestro Gergiev. Additional SFS attractions include the debut of percussionist **Evelyn Glennie**. Mastering a progressive loss of hearing since the age of eight, this astounding musician can be heard at Davies Symphony Hall on October 23.

The **American Conservatory Theater's** production of *Home*, by British playwright David Storey, brings together a quartet of local legends. Ruth Kobart, Joy Carlin, Sydney Walker, and William Paterson, the play's four leads, represent fifteen decades of theater experience among them. All have a history with A.C.T. as well: Carlin is a former associate artistic director; Walker made his acting debut with A.C.T. in 1974; while Paterson and Kobart took their first bows at A.C.T. in 1967. Artistic director Carey Perloff, who will direct, has had *Home* in mind since coming to A.C.T. in 1992 "but the icing on the cake was the thought of Sydney, Bill, Joy and Ruth working together on this moving script." *Home* begins performances at the Stage Door Theater on October 20.

—Robert Simonson

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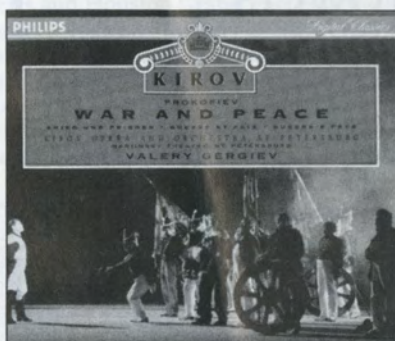
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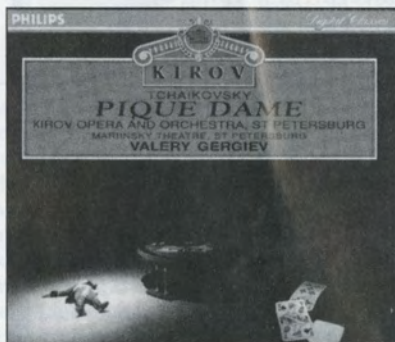
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ARTIST PROFILES



Leading soprano of the Kirov Opera, **Galina Gorchakova** is making her San Francisco Opera debut in the role of Renata in *The Fiery Angel*, one of the most demanding parts in the operatic repertoire. Born in Novokuznetsk in Siberia, she was educated at the Novosibirsk Conservatory, and became a permanent member of the the Kirov Opera in 1991. With that company, she participated in extensive tours abroad, which took her to England, Germany, Finland, Scotland, Israel, and the United States. Her roles include Lisa in *The Queen of Spades*, Tatyana in *Eugene Onegin*, Elisabetta in *Don Carlo*, Leonora in *Il Trovatore*, and the title role of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. During this year's Kirov Opera Rimsky-Korsakov Festival, she was featured in two leading roles: the title part of Olga in *The Maid of Pskov*, and Fevronia in *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh*. She was also heard in concert performances of Tchaikovsky's *Oprichnik* at the Edinburgh Festival (1992), and in the last scene of *Eugene Onegin* with Sergei Leiferkus at Tanglewood (1993), under the direction of Seiji Ozawa. Also in 1993, she recorded Tchaikovsky's *Mazeppa*, also with Leiferkus, conducted by Neeme Järvi. Most recently, she was heard with the Los Angeles and Houston Grand operas in the title role of *Madama Butterfly*, at Cologne as Tatyana in *Eugene Onegin*, and at Milan's La Scala in *The Fiery Angel*. The latter was also the subject of a 1993 live telecast for the BBC and a soon-to-be-released videocassette. Forthcoming engagements include Britten's *War Requiem* with the Boston Symphony and Seiji Ozawa, *Tosca* at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and duo recitals with Sergei Leiferkus.



Making her San Francisco Opera debut in the role of the Fortuneteller and Mother Superior in *The Fiery Angel* is Russian mezzo-soprano **Larissa Diadkova**. Born at Zelenodolsk in the Tatar Republic, she graduated from the Leningrad Conservatory in 1978, was accepted as a trainee at the Kirov Opera, became a soloist with the company in 1981, and a winner at the Glinka All-Union Vocal Competition in 1984. By now, her repertory includes the following roles: Vanya in *Ivan Susanin*, Ratmir in *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, Marfa in *Khovanshchina*, Konchakova in *Prince Igor*, Olga in *Eugene Onegin*, Paulina and the Countess in *The Queen of Spades*, Lyubov in Tchaikovsky's *Mazeppa*, Maddalena in *Rigoletto*, Princess Clarice in *Love for Three Oranges*, the Duenna in *Betrothal in a Monastery* (both by Prokofiev), Nezhata in *Sadko* and Kashcheyevna in *Kashchei the Immortal* (both by Rimsky-Korsakov; the latter the subject of this year's BBC Studio 3 broadcast and concert with the London Symphony Orchestra under Maestro Gergiev). Miss Diadkova has performed in Great Britain, Finland, Italy, Israel, Austria, Germany, Holland, Spain and the United States. Future engagements include Lyubov in *Mazeppa* with the Netherlands Opera, Ulrica in *Un Ballo in Maschera* at the Opéra de Paris/Bastille and a 1995 solo recital in London's Wigmore Hall. Her recordings include *Mazeppa*, *Sadko*, *The Fiery Angel*, and Shostakovich's *Krillov Fables*.

THE FIERY ANGEL



Russian soprano **Tatiana Filimonova** makes her San Francisco Opera debut in the role of the Second Young Nun in Prokofiev's *The Fiery Angel*. Member of the Kirov Opera since 1978, her repertory includes the roles of Maria in *Mazeppa*; Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin*; Inez in *Il Trovatore*; Flora in *La Traviata*; Stepanida, Perfilievna, Vlassievna and the title role in Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Maid of Pskov*; Ortrud in *Lohengrin*, Charlotte in *Werther*, Yaroslava in *Prince Igor*; Clara in Prokofiev's *Betrothal in a Monastery*; and Skomorishina in Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sadko*. Miss Filimonova, a native of St. Petersburg, has toured extensively with the Kirov Opera, visiting several European countries and Japan, and has taken part in several of the company's recordings. On videotape, she is featured in the live recording of *The Fiery Angel*, as well as on the NHK release of *Sadko*.



Lyric soprano **Kristin Clayton**, a 1994 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, makes her mainstage debut in *The Dangerous Liaisons* and will also appear in productions of *The Fiery Angel* and *Hérodiade*. This past summer, she received accolades for her performance as Andromache in Opera Center's Showcase '94 production of Tippet's *King Priam*. In March of this year, the soprano completed a tour of Guam, Saipan and Pohnpei as part of Opera Center's Pacific Rim Cultural Exchange Program. As a participant in the 1993 Merola Opera Program, she sang the role of Rosalinda in *Die Fledermaus* — the part she also portrayed on Western Opera Theater's 1993 national tour — and was awarded the Jean Donnell Memorial Award at the 1993 Merola Opera Grand Finals concert. Miss Clayton has also performed with Wolftrap Opera, singing Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* and the First Lady in *Die Zauberflöte*. A native of Atlanta, she received her master of music degree from the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where she performed in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Carmen*, *Die Fledermaus* and *Zaïde*. In February of 1995, she will make her debut with the Marin Symphony Orchestra as Mimi in a concert version of *La Bohème*.



A 1994 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, mezzo-soprano **Elizabeth Bishop** makes her San Francisco Opera mainstage debut as Emilie in *The Dangerous Liaisons*, continuing as Inez in *Il Trovatore*, A Nun in *The Fiery Angel*, and Pantaloni in *Mefistofele*. In 1993, she made her Metropolitan Opera debut in a production of *Death in Venice*, and will return to the Met in 1995 to appear in *The Ghosts of Versailles*. This summer, Miss Bishop received critical acclaim for her portrayal of Helen in Opera Center's Showcase production of Tippet's *King Priam*. She participated in the 1992 and 1993 Merola Opera Programs, during which she sang Meg Page in *Falstaff* and Ida in *Die Fledermaus*, and portrayed Prince Orlofsky and Ida in Western Opera Theater's national tour of the latter. A native of Greenville, South Carolina, the young mezzo earned a master of music degree from The Juilliard School in 1991 and completed a two-year apprenticeship program as a Juilliard Opera Center Young Artist. While there, she took part in performance demonstrations of *The Ghosts of Versailles*, *Medea* and *The Rape of Lucretia*. Since 1992, Miss Bishop has been featured annually in San Francisco Symphony Pops Concerts.



Soprano **Trudy Ellen Craney** makes her San Francisco Opera debut as the Third Nun in *The Fiery Angel*. An original cast member of John Adams's *Nixon in China*, she has sung the role of Chiang Ch'ing (Mao Tse-Tung's wife) at Houston Grand Opera, the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., Brooklyn Academy of Music, Netherlands Opera, Théâtre Bobigny in Paris, Frankfurt Opera, Edinburgh Festival and Los Angeles Music Center Opera. She can be heard on the Grammy award-winning

recording of the work, and was featured on the Emmy award-winning "Great Performances" telecast. A native of New Jersey, the soprano made her professional debut in 1986 with Connecticut Grand Opera in the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Other roles include Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Konstanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Queen of the Night in *Die Zauberflöte*, Gilda in *Rigoletto*, Violetta in *La Traviata*, Micaëla in *Carmen*, Musetta in *La Bohème* and Amalia in *I Masnadieri*. Miss Craney is also noted for her work in contemporary and unusual repertoire, having earned critical acclaim for performances in the world premiere of Rudenstien's *Faustus*, as well as in Busoni's *Turandot*, Henze's *Pollicino*, Cherubini's *Medea* and J.C. Bach's *Amadis de Gaule*.



Mezzo-soprano **Pamela Dillard** returns to the Company's main stage following her 1993 participation in San Francisco Opera Center's Merola Opera Program. As a Merola Opera Program member, she sang the role of Prince Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus*. Miss Dillard made her professional operatic debut in 1992 in a leading role in Boston Lyric Opera's production of Kurt Weill's *Lost in the Stars*. She returned to Boston Lyric in 1993 to sing the role of Ursula in *Beatrice and Benedict*, staged by Colin Gra-

ham. She has also appeared with the Opera Theatre of St. Louis, most recently as Meg Page in *Falstaff*. In addition, she has many concert and recital engagements to her credit, including performances with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the St. Louis Symphony, and the Boston Pops. A native of Atlanta, Miss Dillard graduated from Newcomb College of Tulane University, and earned a Master of Music degree from the Opera Institute of Boston University. She is a recipient of several awards, including the 1994 Richard Gaddes Fund Award, the 1993 Richard Strauss Opera Study Award from the S.F. Opera Center, and the 1994 Metropolitan Opera Auditions. The mezzo-soprano recently recorded a CD of spirituals and art songs by African-American women composers.



A 1992 and 1993 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, **Man-Hua Gao** performs roles in *The Dangerous Liaisons* and *The Fiery Angel*, as well as the title role in student matinee performances of *Lucia di Lammermoor*. A native of the People's Republic of China, she received her training at the Shanghai Conservatory and the Boston University School of Music. In 1984 she won first place in the Beijing National Voice Competition, competing against singers from all 29 provinces. She was also

a prizewinner at the International Belvedere Competition in Vienna, which led to performances all across China and tours to Hungary, Canada, Japan, Thailand, Singapore and Hong Kong. As a participant in the 1990 Merola Opera Program, Miss Gao sang the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, repeated the role on Western Opera Theater's national tour and the next year won the Schwabacher Family Award at the Merola Opera Program's Grand Finals. She made her San Francisco Opera debut in 1993 as Cleone in *Ermione*, and in the same season was heard as Ginevra in the Showcase production of *Ariodante* and Adina in student matinee perfor-

mances of *L'Elisir d'Amore*. Heard in *Der Rosenkavalier* with Hawaii Opera Theater, she returns there next year as Madame Goldentrill in *The Impresario*.



Mezzo-soprano **Mika Shigematsu**, a 1993-94 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, sings the role of Emilia in *Otello*, A Nun in *The Fiery Angel* and Alisa in *Lucia di Lammermoor*. A native of Osaka, Japan, she made her San Francisco Opera mainstage debut in *Der Rosenkavalier* during the 1993 Celebration of Strauss and was heard during the 1993 Fall Season as Enrichetta in *I Puritani*. For the recent Boston Lyric Opera production of the Malibran version of that work, she sang the leading role of Elvira, which she will repeat during that company's 1995 tour of Japan. Miss Shigematsu will also return to Boston in 1995 to sing Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. As a participant in the 1991 and 1992 Merola Opera Programs, she was awarded the Poetz Memorial Award at two consecutive Grand Finals concerts. The mezzo recently made her European recital debut in Geneva, where she performed to a sold-out audience of 1,800, and this past summer, she sang Arsamene in *Xerxes* at the Carmel Bach Festival. Future engagements include a recital at Opéra de Lyon, the title role of *La Cenerentola* at Opera Colorado, and productions of *Così fan tutte* and *Manon Lescaut* at the Paris Opera.



Mezzo-soprano **Donna Petersen**, who appears as the Hostess of the Inn in *The Fiery Angel*, has performed over 30 roles in her 26 seasons with San Francisco Opera. Among them are the Innkeeper in *Boris Godunov*, Sister Mathilde in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Mother Goose in *The Rake's Progress*, Marcellina in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Mrs. Sedley in *Peter Grimes*, Grimgerde in *Die Walküre* (a role she has performed in seven different San Francisco Opera stagings), Mary in *Der Fliegende Holländer*, Filipjevna in *Eugene Onegin*, the Sister Monitor in *Suor Angelica*, Giovanna in *Rigoletto*, and the Governess in *The Queen of Spades*. A veteran of numerous Western Opera Theater tours and seasons with Spring Opera Theater, she has also appeared with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Diego Opera and the Guild Opera of Los Angeles. Concert engagements include performances with the San Francisco Symphony, Oakland Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Honolulu Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra of Mexico City, and at Carnegie Hall (N.Y. premiere of Alfred Schnittke's *Requiem*). Miss Petersen, who has been head of the Voice Department at Mills College for 24 years, was honored as a Knight of the Royal Order of Dannebrog by Queen Margrethe II of Denmark in 1976.



Performing the role of Ruprecht in *Fiery Angel*, baritone **Sergei Leiferkus** returns to the site of his U.S. opera debut, which took place here in 1989 in the role of Telramund in *Lohengrin*. His most recent appearance here was as Rangoni in the 1992 staging of *Boris Godunov*. Born and raised in Leningrad, the artist studied at the Leningrad Conservatory of Music. Since his western debut with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under Kurt Masur, he has appeared with major opera companies and sympho-

ny orchestras around the world. These include the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden, Vienna State Opera, Paris Opera Bastille, Milan's La Scala, Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires and the Metropolitan Opera in New York; the London Symphony, Boston Symphony, New York Philharmonic and the Philadelphia Orchestra under leading conductors such as Claudio Abbado, Bernard Haitink, Zubin Mehta, Seiji Ozawa and Georg Solti. The baritone's operatic repertoire includes title roles of *Eugene Onegin*, *Mazeppa*, *Don Giovanni*, *Prince Igor* and *Nabucco*; Pizarro in *Fidelio*, Amonasro in *Aida*, Don Carlo in *La Forza del Destino*, Baron Scarpia in *Tosca*, Méphistophélès in *La Damnation de Faust*, Escamillo in *Carmen*, Iago in *Otello*, and about thirty others. Leiferkus records for all the leading record and video companies and gives recitals across Europe and North America. He recently held master classes for the first time at the Britten-Pears School in Aldeburgh.



Soloist of the Kirov Opera since 1987, bass **Bulat Minzhiliev**, Inquisitor in *The Fiery Angel*, has toured extensively with the company: to Switzerland and Greece in 1989; Italy, Finland and Germany in 1990; Spain, England (Covent Garden), Scotland (Edinburgh Festival), Israel and the U.S. (Metropolitan Opera) in 1992. A native of Frunze in the Kirghiz Republic, he is of Kirghiz descent. Graduate of the Tashkent Conservatory in Uzbekistan, Minzhiliev proceeded to win prizes at many Russian

competitions, then continued winning the grand prix at the Toulouse International Competition in 1971 and the first prize at the Sofia International Competition in 1973. His roles with the Kirov Opera include Khan Konchak (recorded on CD) and Prince Galitsky in *Prince Igor*, Ivan Khovansky in *Khovanshchina* (available on CD and video recordings), the Inquisitor in *The Fiery Angel*, King Philip and the Grand Inquisitor in *Don Carlo*, Ramfis in *Aida*, Méphistophélès in *Faust*, Don Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Boris and Pimen in *Boris Godunov*, Prince Gremin in *Eugene Onegin*, King René in *Iolanta*, King Dodon in *The Golden Cockerel*, The Viking Merchant in *Sadko*, Ivan the Terrible in *The Maid of Pskov*, Ruslan in *Ruslan in Lyudmila*, and General Kutuzov in *War and Peace*.



Russian tenor **Konstantin Pluzhnikov**, Mephistopheles in *The Fiery Angel*, studied at the Leningrad Conservatory and joined the roster of the Maly Opera in 1969. In 1971, he became a member of the Kirov Opera and has been a leading principal there ever since. Winner of the 1968 Glinka All-Russia vocal competition, he also excelled at the 1970 Bucharest International Competition and the 1972 Geneva International Competition. The native of Batumi in the Georgian Republic, he has per-

formed extensively abroad, both in opera and concert, and has thus far been heard in Italy, Germany, Spain, Scotland (Edinburgh Festival), Finland, Israel, Austria, Holland, Japan, and the United States. Pluzhnikov's repertoire includes the following roles: Lensky in *Eugene Onegin*, Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Ernesto in *Don Pasquale*, Alfredo in *La Traviata*, the Duke in *Rigoletto*, Count Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, the title roles of *Faust*, *Lohengrin*, *Sadko* and *Don Carlos*, the Simpleton in *Boris Godunov*, the Scrivener in *Khovanshchina*, Afanasy in *The Fair at Sorochinsk*, and Mephistopheles in *The Fiery Angel*. The tenor has made some 30 recordings, which include participation in the "Anthology of Russian Music." With the Kirov Opera alone, he can be heard as Mephistopheles in *The Fiery Angel* (audio and video), Yeroshka in *Prince Igor* (audio), and the Scrivener in *Khovanshchina* (audio and video).



First heard at the San Francisco Opera in his U.S. debut roles of Ivanov and Fyodor in Prokofiev's *War and Peace* (1991), tenor **Grier Hanedanyan** returns to the stage of the War Memorial as Agrippa von Nettesheim in *The Fiery Angel*. Born in Kamensk, he completed his studies at the Lvov Conservatory, then joined the Lvov Opera Theater where he performed leading baritone roles, such as the title role of *Rigoletto*, Baron Scarpia in *Tosca*, Amonasro in *Aida*, Alfio in *Cavalleria Rusticana* and Escamillo

in *Carmen*. After a while, he joined the Odessa Opera, where he started appearing in roles from the tenor repertoire: Canio in *Pagliacci*, Don José in *Carmen*, Cavaradossi in *Tosca*, Radames in *Aida* and the title role of *The Tales of Hoffmann*. Currently a member of the Perm Opera, he makes frequent guest appearances with the Kirov Opera as well as Moscow's Bolshoi Theater, and was heard as Gherman in *The Queen of Spades*, Riccardo in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, The Duke in *Rigoletto*, Vaudeumont in *Iolanta*, Golitsin and Andrei in *Khovanshchina*, and the title role of Verdi's *Otello*. Other guest appearances have included tours to Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Romania, Poland, the Netherlands and Austria.



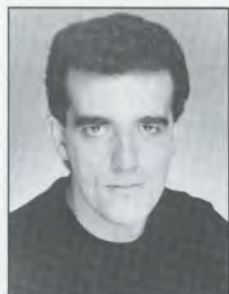
Australian bass **Daniel Sumegi** (who recently portrayed the title part of S.F. Opera Center's North American premiere production of Tippett's *King Priam*) sings three roles: A Gypsy (*Il Trovatore*), Biterolf (*Tannhäuser*), and Faust (*The Fiery Angel*). A 1993-94 Adler Fellow, he made his Company debut in 1992 as Mathieu in *Andrea Chénier* and Snug in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, subsequently appearing here in *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Capriccio*, *Die Meistersinger*, *The Queen of Spades* and *La Bohème*. A Mer-

ola Opera Program participant in 1991 (United States debut in *La Traviata*), he toured Japan and the U.S. last year in Western Opera Theater's production of *Bohème*. The young artist has also performed at the Lyric Opera of Queensland, State Opera of South Australia, Victoria State Opera, Australian Opera, London Opera Festival, Barcelona's Olympic Games Arts Festival, and Vienna's Konzerthaus. A finalist in the 1992 Luciano Pavarotti/Philadelphia Opera Company International Voice Competition, Sumegi is the recipient of numerous scholarships and awards, including this year's Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. Next season's assignments take him to Turin (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Australian Opera, Sydney (*Aida*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*), Victoria State Opera (Prince Gremin in *Eugene Onegin*) and De National Reisopera of the Netherlands (*Méphistophélès* in *Faust*).



American tenor **Matthew Lord** is in his San Francisco Opera debut season, during which he will appear in productions of *The Dangerous Liaisons*, *The Fiery Angel* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Member of the prestigious Juilliard Opera Center for two consecutive seasons, he was heard there as Judge Danforth in Robert Ward's Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Crucible* and the title role in Vaughan Williams's *Hugh The Drover*. As a guest artist at the Juilliard Opera Center, Lord also appeared as Nerone in

Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*. He also portrayed the title role in Opera Delaware's world premiere of Conrad Cummings's *Tonkin*, and was the Steersman in *Der Fliegende Holländer* with Dallas Opera. In other recent seasons, the California native was featured in leading roles with San Francisco Opera Center's Western Opera Theater, the Monadnock Music Festival (NH), Chicago Opera Theatre, and Opera Theater of St. Louis. His concert appearances include an engagement with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra in performances of Hannibal Peterson's *African Portrait* and with the Juilliard Orchestra in performances of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony at Avery Fisher Hall.



Born in Luzern, Switzerland, and raised in Valladolid, Spain, baritone **Eduardo del Campo** is a 1994 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center. In his War Memorial Opera House debut season, he will appear in *Macbeth*, *The Fiery Angel*, *Hérodiade* and as Enrico in student performances of *Lucia di Lammermoor*. While participating in the 1993 Merola Opera Program, he portrayed Ford in *Falstaff* and Frank in *Die Fledermaus*, and was awarded the first place Schwabacher Family Award

at the Grand Finals concert. The baritone recently completed his third year as a Young Artist with the Juilliard Opera Center, after receiving an advanced certificate from Juilliard in 1991. He also holds a bachelor's degree in piano, voice and musicology from the Music Conservatory and University of Valladolid, as well as a doctor's degree in medicine and surgery. Among the vocal competitions he won are the International Singing Competition of Bilbao and the Gayarré/Carreras International Singing Competition. He was also a finalist in the Met's 1992 National Auditions, and a winner in the 1993 Opera Index and Puccini Foundation competitions. Following appearances with the Virginia and Grand Rapids opera companies, he made his New York City Opera debut as the Count in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and has been invited to return in 1995. Earlier this year, he was featured in the role of Patroclus in San Francisco Opera Center's Showcase production of Tippett's *King Priam*. Future engagements include the role of Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* with Austin Opera.



American baritone **Earle Patriarco**, an Opera Center Adler Fellow since 1993, performs the roles of the Footman in *The Dangerous Liaisons* and the Doctor in *The Fiery Angel*. Following his San Francisco Opera mainstage debut in the 1992 staging of *Boris Godunov*, he appeared in productions of *Andrea Chénier*, *La Forza del Destino* and *Christophe Colomb*. He was heard in *La Traviata* during the 1991 Merola Opera Program and returned in 1992 to portray Marcello in *La Bohème*, a role he repeated

on Western Opera Theater's national tour and again during Opera Center's 1993 tour of Japan. In July of this year, he portrayed Hector in the Center's North American premiere of Tippett's *King Priam*. A native of Southern California, Patriarco recently made his European operatic debut as Marcello at the Stuttgart Staatstheater, and has also performed with West Coast Opera, Los Angeles Concert Opera, Marin Opera, San Francisco Symphony Pops and the 1991 Mozart Festival in Lugano, Switzerland. Upcoming engagements include his 1995 debut with Boston Lyric Opera as Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*.



Bass-baritone **Steven Condry** sings the role of the Innkeeper at Cologne in *The Fiery Angel*. As a participant in the 1990 Merola Opera Program, as well as on Western Opera Theater's national tour, he sang Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, returning in 1991 as Krušina in *The Bartered Bride* and as Baron Douphol in *La Traviata*. The native of Plainview, N.Y. has subsequently performed here in *Salome*, *Capriccio*, *Boris Godunov*, and in last fall's productions of *Die Meistersinger* (Hans Schwarz) and the student matinee performances of *La Fille du Régiment* (Sulpice). A 1992 winner of the Pavarotti Voice Competition, Condry is also the recipient of the Sullivan Foundation's series of Role Preparation Grants and a 1994 Career Grant of the Richard Tucker Music Foundation; first prize winner in the 1994 Pope Foundation Competition; 1993 winner in the MacAllister Award Competition; and a national finalist in the 1993 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. Future plans include Dr. Bartolo in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* for Orlando Opera, the title role of *Don Pasquale* for Connecticut Grand Opera, and Baron Zeta in *The Merry Widow* for Dayton Opera.



An Opera Center Adler Fellow since 1993, bass-baritone **Chester D. Patton** made his San Francisco Opera debut in *Salome* during the 1993 Strauss Festival, returning in the fall for the Mandarin in *Turandot* (televised on PBS) and Lord Walton in *I Puritani*. This season, he portrays the Doctor in *Macbeth* and will also appear in *The Fiery Angel* and as Raimondo in the student matinee performances of *Lucia di Lammermoor*. This past summer, he was heard in the title role of Opera Center's North

American premiere of Tippet's *King Priam*. A native of Columbia, Mississippi, Patton earned his master of music degree at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. His numerous prizes and awards include the first prize in the 1993 Leontyne Price Vocal Artists Competition and one of the top prizes in the 1994 Loren Zachary vocal competition. While enrolled in the Merola Opera Program, he sang Colline in *La Bohème*, a role he repeated on Western Opera Theater's 1992 national tour. Patton recently completed a tour of the Pacific islands of Guam, Saipan and Pohnpei as part of San Francisco Opera Center's Pacific Rim Cultural Exchange Program. Future plans include several roles with Hawaii Opera, including Colline in *La Bohème* and Ferrando in *Il Trovatore*.



Bass **Scott Wilde**, in his third consecutive San Francisco Opera season, portrays Reinmar in *Tannhäuser* and a Peasant in *The Fiery Angel*. In his 1992 debut season with the Company, he sang roles in *Boris Godunov*, *La Forza del Destino*, *Andrea Chénier* and *Christophe Colomb*. Last fall, he was also featured as Roberto in *I Vespri Siciliani*. A native of Wisconsin and a graduate of the Manhattan School of Music, he continued his studies as a member of the Juilliard Opera Center and several other prominent young artists' programs. Some of his recent engagements include Crespel and Luther in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and Silvano in *Un Ballo in Maschera* with Washington Opera; Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* and Theseus in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at St. Louis Opera; Leporello in *Don Giovanni* and Don Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* with Madison Opera; Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* with Virginia Opera; Lodovico in *Otello* with Orlando Opera; and the First Nazarene in *Salome* with the Washington and Baltimore opera companies. Wilde was also featured in several roles with the New York City Opera. Future engagements include Ferrando in *Il Trovatore* with Opera Southwest in New Mexico, and Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* with Madison Opera.



Artistic Director of the Kirov Opera of St. Petersburg, **Valery Gergiev** returns to the San Francisco Opera to conduct *The Fiery Angel* and *Hérodiade*. His previous conducting assignment here was the highly praised 1991 presentation of Prokofiev's *War and Peace*. Born in Moscow, he studied conducting at the Leningrad Conservatory with the noted teacher Ilya Musin. Now, as one of the world's busiest and most sought-after conductors, he is applauded at the podiums of the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden, Metropolitan Opera (this year's *Otello*, heard on the Saturday radio broadcast), most major European opera houses, as well as the world's top orchestras. At St. Petersburg, Gergiev has, since his 1988 appointment as artistic director and principal conductor, raised the standards of the company to unprecedented heights, so that it now ranks as the top opera company of Russia. So far, he has organized three festivals devoted to a single composer (Mussorgsky in 1989, Prokofiev in 1992, and Rimsky-Korsakov in 1994), launched the Mikkeli Festival in Finland, initiated cooperative productions with the San Francisco Opera and Covent Garden, and made a large number of audio and video recordings for Philips Classics. These include *Khovanshchina*, *War and Peace*, *The Queen of Spades*, several orchestral albums and recitals, complete ballets *Romeo and Juliet* and *Sleeping Beauty*, and the soon-to-be-released *Prince Igor*, *Fiery Angel*, *Sadko* and *The Gambler*. In May, he conducted Kirov Opera's new production of Glinka's *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, a co-production with San Francisco Opera, directed by Lotfi Mansouri, and scheduled for performances here during the 1995 season.



Conductor **Alexander Polianichko** is making his United States opera debut by leading the October 21 performance of *The Fiery Angel*. The musician was born in Volgograd and educated first at the Rostov-on-the-Don Conservatory (violin), then at the Leningrad Conservatory (conducting). His post-graduate years at the Conservatory included extensive work with Prof. Ilya Musin, a celebrated pedagogue who also taught Maestro Gergiev. In 1988, he won the first prize at the All-Union Conductors' Competition.

His professional experience includes four years as violinist with the Leningrad Philharmonic under Evgeny Mravinsky, and the artistic direction of the Belorussian State Chamber Orchestra in Minsk. With that ensemble, he has toured abroad and recorded an album of music by contemporary Belorussian composers. Since 1989, he has held the position of house conductor at the Maryinsky Theater in St. Petersburg, where his duties include working with both the Kirov Opera and Ballet companies. Polianichko's repertoire includes *Eugene Onegin*, *Boris Godunov*, *The Marriage*, *The Fair at Sorochinsk*, *The Duenna*, *The Fiery Angel*, *Faust*, *Lohengrin*, *Otello*, *La Bohème*, *Rusalka*, as well as several major full-length ballets. Foreign appearances with the Kirov Opera and Ballet include visits to Britain (Edinburgh, 1991), Spain (1991), the U.S. (Los Angeles, 1992), Japan, South Korea and Finland (1993). This year, he scored a major success with the new production of *Eugene Onegin* at London's English National Opera, followed by performances of *La Bohème* in Norway.



In his San Francisco Opera debut, **David Freeman** stages the Company premiere of *The Fiery Angel*, a production which he has directed to great acclaim at St. Petersburg's Maryinsky Theater, as well as in London, New York, Tokyo, and for BBC-TV. The multi-faceted artist founded the Opera Factory in Sydney, Australia (1973), and subsequently created an Opera Factory in Zurich (1976), in London (1982), and an Opera Factory Film and TV company in 1991. He has directed more than 25 productions for Opera Factory Zurich, performing in five of them and writing the text for four. He has staged 20 productions for the Opera Factory in London (the most recent was the world premiere of Nigel Osborne's *Sarajevo*), eight of which were televised, including the three Mozart/Da Ponte operas. As Associate Artist at the English National Opera, he has staged Monteverdi's *Orfeo* and *The Return of Ulysses*, Philip Glass's *Akhmaten*, and another world premiere, Harrison Birtwistle's *The Mask of Orpheus*. Operatic successes elsewhere include *La Bohème* (Opera North), Ligeti's *Le Grand Macabre* (Freiburg), Auber's *Manon Lescaut* (Opéra Comique), Ligeti's *Adventures* and Maxwell Davies's *Eight Songs for a Mad King* (Châtelet Theater in Paris), as well as *Akhmaten* (Houston Grand Opera and New York City Opera). His theater work includes Goethe's *Faust* (Parts I and II), in addition to his own seven-hour dramatization of Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* for the Lyric, Hammersmith in London. Freeman was appointed a Chevalier of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in 1985.

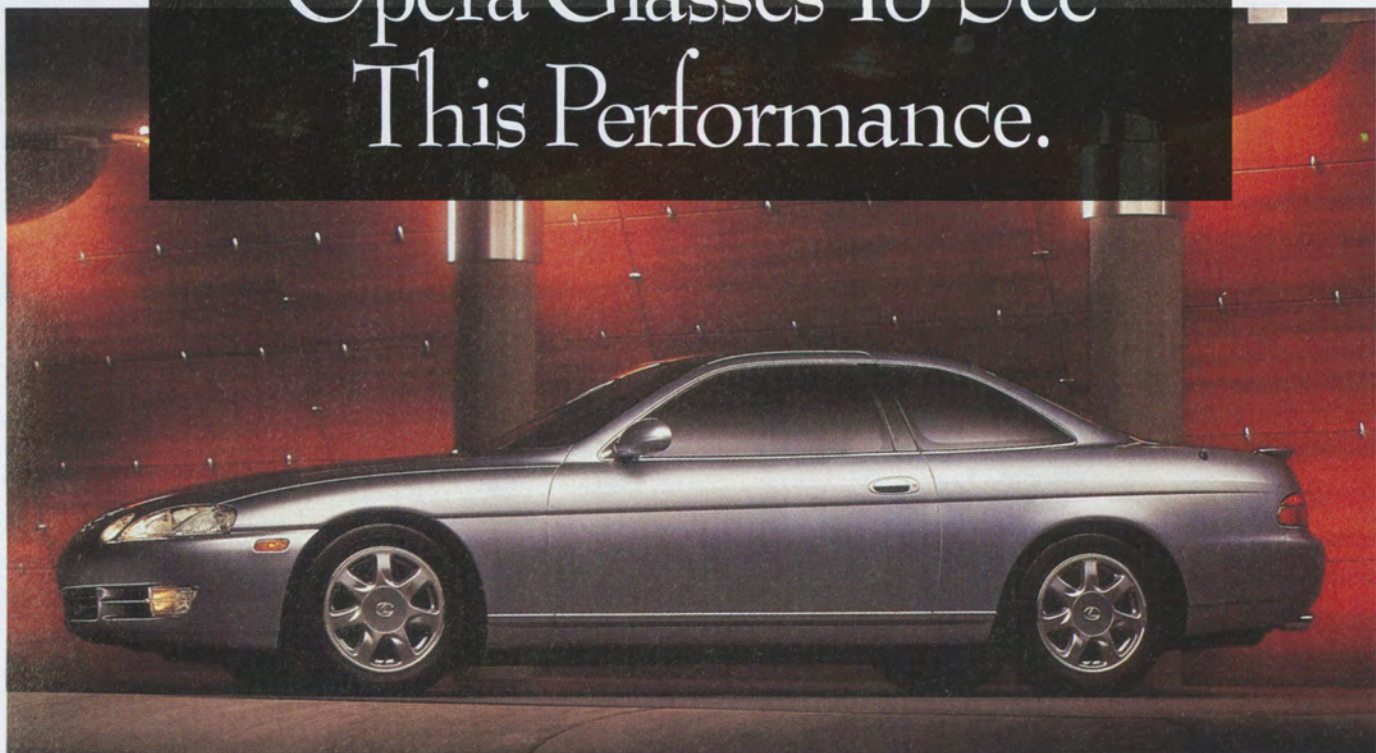


Now in his San Francisco Opera debut-season, **David Roger**, *The Fiery Angel*'s designer, studied stage design in Paris and in London at the English National Opera. A native of Edinburgh, Scotland, he has worked closely with director David Freeman over the past 10 years, designing some 20 productions for Freeman's Opera Factory companies in London and Zurich, ranging from the premieres of Birtwistle's *Yan Tan Tethera* and Xenakis's *The Bacchae* to the Mozart/Da Ponte operas and Cavalli's *La Calisto*. Eight of his productions have been televised and that of *The Fiery Angel* recorded in Russia for video release. He has also designed Philip Glass's *Akhmaten* and Monteverdi's *Return of Ulysses* for the English National Opera; *La Bohème* for Opera North; *Le Grand Macabre* (Ligeti) for Freiburg, Germany; *Manon* in Paris; and *Oedipus Rex* for the Hallé Orchestra of Manchester. Roger's work in the area of dance includes *La Mort de Zarathustra* in Paris, as well as *Circles and Twice Upon* (Berio) at London's Festival Hall. He has also designed many new plays in Great Britain, notably for the Royal Shakespeare Company (premiere of Václav Havel's *Temptation*) and the Royal Court Theatre in London, where he is currently working.



Lighting Director and Design Consultant for San Francisco Opera since 1976, **Thomas J. Munn** created the lighting for *The Dangerous Liaisons*, *Il Trovatore*, *Tannhäuser*, *The Fiery Angel*, *Hérodiade*, *Mefistofele* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*. He has designed the lighting and special effects for over 153 productions for the Company, including the highly acclaimed presentations of Wagner's Ring cycle. As scenic adviser, he has designed scenery for SFO productions of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *Roberto Devereux*, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, *Billy Budd*, *Nabucco*, *Don Giovanni* and *Christopher Colomb*. In addition to his work for the San Francisco Opera, Munn has designed scenery and lighting for Broadway, Off-Broadway, regional theater, ballet, industrials and films. His television and video credits include San Francisco Opera productions of *La Gioconda* (for which he received an Emmy Award), *Samson et Dalila*, *Aida*, *L'Africaine*, *La Bohème*, *Orlando Furioso*, *Mefistofele*, *Capriccio* and *Turandot*. Credits for other companies include work for the Houston Grand Opera, Washington Opera, Chicago Lyric Opera and the Netherlands Opera, scenery and lighting for Hartford Ballet's *Nutcracker* and Ballet Arizona's production of *Coppélia*. He is currently working on a new *Nutcracker* for the Atlanta Ballet.

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THE KIROV CONNECTION

By JOHN ARDOIN

The late Lawrence Kelly, who founded opera companies in Chicago and Dallas, was fond of saying that "An opera house should be the living room of a city."

This wasn't just a good line. He believed it, and, as metaphors go, it has a touch of the poetic as well as the practical. It is another way of seconding Franz Werfel's contention that at the heart of every great city lies its opera house. That's as true of San Francisco as it is of London, Munich, Milan or St. Petersburg.

These days San Francisco and St. Petersburg share in common something more tangible, however, than a somewhat idealistic idea. A strong artistic axis has developed between the two cities in the form of co-productions and the

Built in 1860, the Maryinsky Theater of St. Petersburg is the home of the Kirov Opera and the Kirov Ballet. The building was designed by Albert Cavos and named after Empress Maria Alexandrovna (1824-1880), wife of Alexander II of the Romanov dynasty, a fact that is reflected on the royal insignia printed on an early edition of the Maryinsky program.

John Ardoin is music critic of the Dallas Morning News, author of the newly published book The Furtwängler Record and is about to start on his seventh book, the first history, in English, of the Maryinsky Theater.

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KIROV OPERA

Scenes from the 1994 new production of Glinka's *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, directed at St. Petersburg by San Francisco Opera's Lotfi Mansouri.

Top: Vladimir Ognovenko as Ruslan. Ognovenko was featured on two previous occasions here: as Prince Nicolai Bolkonsky and Matveyev in the 1991 *War and Peace*, and as Varlaam in the 1992 *Boris Godunov*.

Middle: Tatiana Vorozhtsova as Lyudmila and Mikhail Shteyn as the dwarf Chernomor.

Bottom: Kirov Ballet dancers in the scene at the Palace of Chernomor.

sharing of resident talent and resources. Conductor Valery Gergiev, the artistic director of the Maryinsky Theater (formerly the Kirov, and still referred to as such outside of Russia) and several of his key singers return this fall to San Francisco for performances of Prokofiev's *The Fiery Angel*; this inventive, startling production was created as a joint venture between the two houses, along with London's Royal Opera. And last season, general director Lotfi Mansouri went to St. Petersburg to stage Glinka's *Ruslan and Lyudmila*.

The Kirov connection dates back to 1991 when Gergiev appeared with San Francisco Opera in his U.S. opera debut. He had come west with a group of his singers for performances of Prokofiev's *War and Peace*. Three years earlier, at the age of 35, Gergiev had been given the reins of what was then the Kirov when its director, conductor Yuri Temirkanov, succeeded Evgeny Mravinsky as the head of the Leningrad Philharmonic. Perestroika was just beginning to be felt.

Gergiev's highly acclaimed San Francisco debut was part of an initial step taken to expand the life and horizons of the Kirov. He felt instinctively that if there was to be a future for his company, it would have to be one spent partly on the road. After all, that's how he had begun his career, balancing concerts in Berlin, Dresden, London and Holland with his responsibilities in Leningrad (He joined the Kirov's conducting staff in 1976 at the age of 23 after winning the Herbert von Karajan Competition in Berlin).

But to return to 1991...

Gergiev and the full Kirov company traveled to the Edinburgh Festival in August for a cycle of works by Mussorgsky. While there, on August 19th to be exact, a coup back home attempted to overthrow the government of Mikhail Gorbachev. It was the beginning of the end for over seventy years of Russian Communism, though no one quite realized it at the time.

When the Edinburgh engagement was finished, the orchestra headed to Italy for concerts, the chorus flew home, and Gergiev and his singers traveled to San Francisco. At that moment, no one knew what the future might hold. Gergiev remembers that, after arriving, he "stayed up four nights in a row" to watch CNN, as Boris Yeltsin and Gorbachev played their game of one-upmanship once the coup had failed.

Though Yeltsin came out on top, the tug-of-war for power in Russia is still not over. But it is not as much of a cliff-hanger these days; this fall, Gergiev should be able

to get more sleep. He'll need it, for in addition to rehearsing and conducting seven performances of *The Fiery Angel* with such Kirov favorites as Galina Gorchakova, Larissa Dyadkova, Tatiana Filimonova, Sergei Leiferkus, Bulat Minzhiliev and Konstantin Pluzhnikov, he has taken on the first five performances of an opera entirely new to him — Massenet's *Hérodiade*.

While the Massenet opera has its allures, it is the Russian repertory that is closest to Gergiev's heart. He is a man with a mission, and that is to return to currency the mainline Russian repertory, record it in audio and video formats and preserve and strengthen the performing style of his company.

From the time it opened its doors in 1860 until the capital of Russia moved back to Moscow following the Revolution of 1917, the Maryinsky was the land's principal home for the performing arts. Its influential opera and ballet companies are housed in a massive green-and-white, wedding-cake building that is located in a central square across from the city Conservatory of Music.

Inside, it is not a large theater (it seats just over 1,700), but it is one of the most exquisitely outfitted spaces for opera in the world. Although its repertory and artists were dominated in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by foreign singers and music, chiefly Italian, it was here that some of the most significant works in the Russian repertory had their premieres—Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Snow Maiden*, *Mlada* and *Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh*, Borodin's *Prince Igor* and Tchaikovsky's *Queen of Spades*. Here, too, the world premiere of Verdi's *La Forza del Destino* took place in 1862.

It is important to remember that the Kirov (so named in 1935 for the city's slain Communist leader) is located in a city with a strong empathy for culture and physical beauty. Its parks, promenades and architectural splendors create an atmosphere of harmony and unity that have long encouraged art as a natural part of life.

But, for a long time after the Revolution, the Kirov was a bit like Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty* (which also had its premiere there)—asleep and awaiting a Prince Charming to wake it up. With Moscow and the Bolshoi Theater as the new seats of power, the Kirov by the mid-1930s had become little more than a glorified regional house.

Though it lost much of its sense of adventure during this period, there was something that decades of Bolshoi domin-

ance and Russian insularity could not kill—a distinct performance style that somehow managed to stay more or less intact, impervious to what was going on outside the borders of what was the Soviet Union. This is what Gergiev, that eagerly awaited Prince Charming, is building on, refining and restoring. Today, it is the Bolshoi that is widely perceived as the land's second house, while the Kirov goes from strength to strength.

No one foisted the role of crusader on Gergiev; he could have long ago settled into a comfortable, plush post in the west and not given the Kirov's future a second thought. There was no lack of offers; he is the hottest young conductor (he just turned forty this year) in the world today and he regularly appears on the major podiums from Berlin and Amsterdam to Chicago and New York. In fact, his management turns down far more engagements than he accepts.

Gergiev is not indifferent to money; no one carrying the burden of an opera company on their shoulders could afford to be altruistic. He is keenly aware of what a dollar, a peseta or a mark will buy for the Kirov in terms of helping the company remain true to itself.

In addition to the normal avenues of financing the Kirov, Gergiev also searches for additional revenue "to enable the best Russian singers to continue working and developing in the Russian national opera tradition—this is far more important for opera today than to have the same singers dispersed and performing everything everywhere."

As critic-commentator Joseph Horowitz observed, this idea is typical of Gergiev, combining a "cold business sense with warm idealism." To this end he has established the "Friends of the Kirov" in Europe, and there will shortly be a branch of the non-profit organization in the United States. He is also establishing mini-festivals outside of St. Petersburg to generate more annual income. A good beginning in that direction has been made in Spain, Germany, Holland, Finland and England. But so far, San Francisco is as close as Gergiev has come to having a toe-hold in the United States. In future seasons, the city will see two of the Kirov stagings, and San Francisco's *Tosca* and *Aida* productions will travel to St. Petersburg.

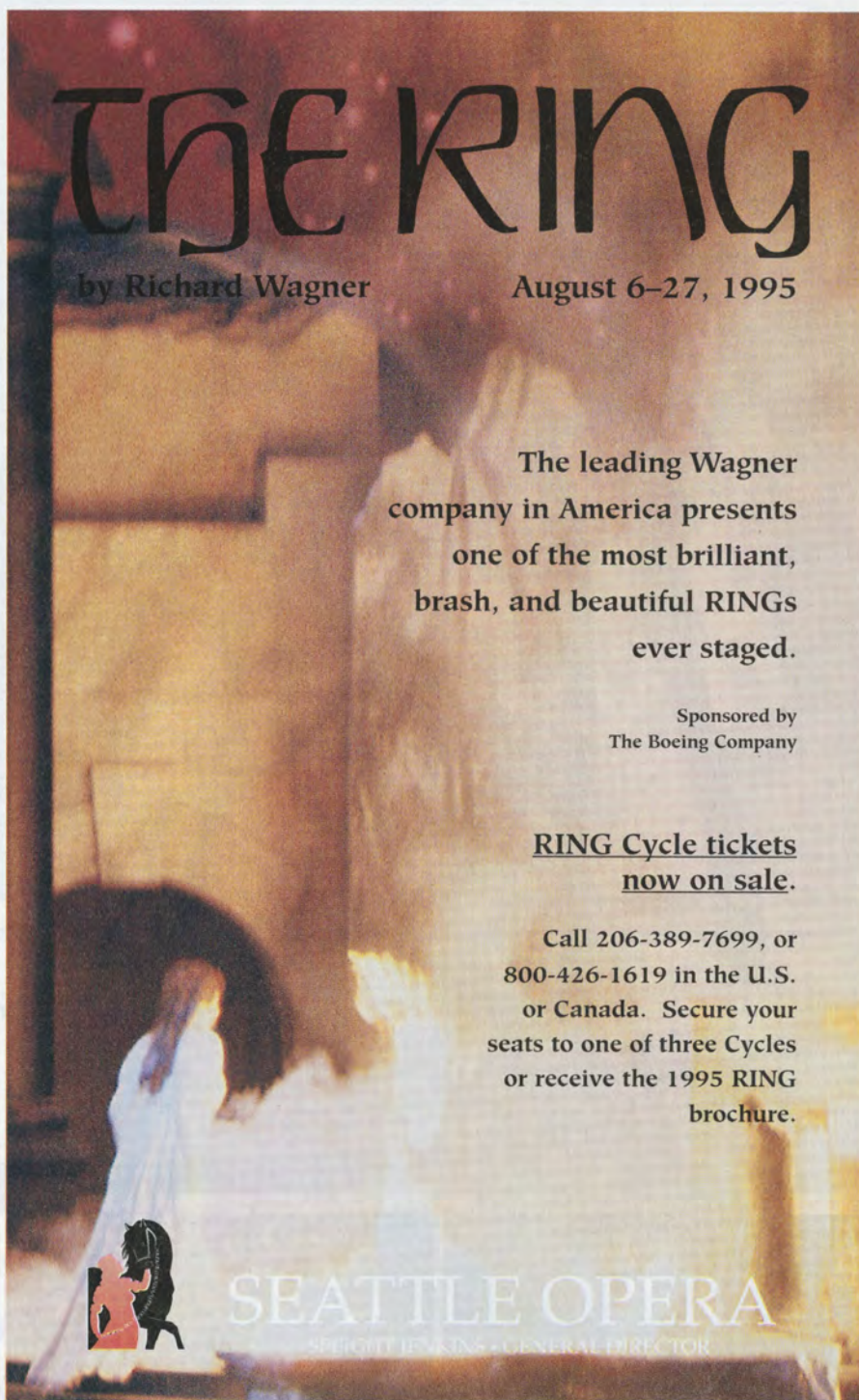
"Life is extremely hard for the company," Mansouri feels after working at the Kirov, "and Valery really pumps an extraordinary amount of energy into its sur-

vival. For instance, after we did *Ruslan* there, he took the production and the entire company to Palermo for 10 performances within nine days. That's how they get hard cash and keep their heads above water. But it is only possible because of Valery's drive."

In February, the Kirov forces will be back in New York (the site of their American debut in 1992) for performances of Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh* at the Brooklyn

Academy of Music. Mansouri saw *Kitezh* while in Russia, and to him it was an "enormous and impressive show, a sort of a Russian *Parsifal*. And to bring it so far for a handful of performances shows you how determined Valery is to spread the word of his company and to generate income."

"I love the Kirov, but I am just as much concerned with Valery's future and for that of his company. I hope he will find time to do different kinds of repertory. I have asked him here for *Turandot*, and I hope it



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Top: Vladimir Ognovenko and Tatiano Vorozhtsova as *Ruslan* and *Lyudmila*.

Bottom Right: Galina Gorchakova as *Volkhova* in Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sadko*.

Bottom Left: Tatiana Kravtsova as the Princess in Rimsky-Korsakov's *Kashchei the Immortal*, part of the Kirov Opera repertoire.

will happen. But beyond questions of repertory, I want him to take it a bit easier and not push so hard. Let me give you just a quick example.

"I had started working on the *Ruslan* production while Valery was in America for a concert. The day he returned from Chicago to St. Petersburg, he had a morning orchestra run-through of *Kitezh*, then he auditioned 140 musicians for openings in the orchestra, and in the evening had a full (orchestra, soloists and chorus) rehearsal of *Ruslan*, which finished after midnight. This sort of schedule is the rule there, not the exception. Next to Valery, all of us seem lazy. I am trying to convince him that he needs a fantastic support system or a major-domo to help him out. Valery doesn't even have anyone to get him a sandwich."

But Gergiev does not have the standard conductor ego that requires klieg lights and pats on the back. Instead, his ego is tied up in the music he conducts and his visions of what his company must become. He has a very powerful commitment these days from Philips Records, but it has come about only because Philips shares his priorities. Gergiev told an interviewer in 1992 that "If I couldn't combine recording and the Kirov, I would choose the Kirov. If I couldn't combine the Kirov with guest conducting—well, no one can tell the future, but whatever or wherever I am in twenty years, I will still be exploring the true Russian music."

And when he speaks of traditions, he doesn't mean "always doing ritardandos or piano or forte in the same place every time...For me it's a certain emotional or sound world that is a sign of national style and soul. We like this world 'soul' in Russia. In other parts of Europe—France, for instance—national operatic traditions have been lost, but because of the communist era, the Kirov—as well as the Bolshoi—was closed off from the rest of the world. In many ways this was a bad thing, but the advantage was that these theaters preserved their look and sound..."

"Internationalization is not going to threaten Russian operatic style as long as we keep the tradition in good hands. I'm not insisting that my hands are the best—or even that it should be in my hands—but it is five seasons since the barriers came down and not only have we kept going, but we've been moving faster and faster."

Not everyone, however, is as dedicated to this cause, and Gergiev admits that he has had difficulty in keeping certain of his



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"I say to singers who want to go abroad, 'Do you want to be singing a supporting role in *Boris* in Saarbrücken or even Munich when we are doing *Kitezh* and *Sadko* at the Kirov?' I go to the west to conduct, but I always return, and I think it is the same for most of the singers. Sure, we have lost some singers this way, like Vladimir Chernov and Sergei Leiferkus. Though Leiferkus still visits and Chernov came back last year for a recording, they are practically western artists by now.

"As a human being, I can understand why some want to go, and I cannot allow myself to blame them; maybe it's easier out of Russia, perhaps the food is better, the air cleaner, there is more comfort. It's my job to convince them to stay, to give them the feeling that they belong to something. This doesn't mean they can't work elsewhere, but most people will always retain special links with their people, their culture, their motherland. And at home they get support; in the west the opera business can be cutthroat—it's a harder place to develop and pace a career slowly. But when we lose someone, we manage; as in nature—with sun and rain, day and night—there is compensation."

Part of the compensation at the Kirov has been the on-going discovery and encouragement of new talent. In this regard, Gergiev seems to possess a divining rod. The company's visit to New York in 1992 was proof of that. On opening night the city was riveted, as San Francisco will be, by Gorchakova's performance in *The Fiery Angel*. Here was not only one of the most compelling and thrilling new sopranos to emerge on the international scene, but an actress of high quality as well.

She is still in her twenties, and Gergiev found her in an audition. He is also responsible for the rapid rise of Olga Borodina, Russia's main mezzo-soprano, and repeat performances of *The Queen of Spades* in New York showed that the company possessed other tenors, sopranos and mezzos almost as good as those in the first cast.

Gergiev correctly sees his job as extending into the areas of marketing new productions and controlling ticket prices during this period of inflation and the falling ruble. Each season since he took over, the Kirov has produced festivals that in part or in toto can be toured abroad. So far, these have been devoted to the work of Mussorgsky, Prokofiev, and, last January, Rimsky-Korsakov.

San Francisco Opera

THE KIROV CONNECTION

He has invited such western directors as Graham Vick for their *War and Peace*, David Freeman, who was responsible for *The Fiery Angel*, and Lotfi Mansouri for *Ruslan and Lyudmila*. Gergiev is quick to tell you that "I know the difference between *Sadko* and *The Fiery Angel*. It would be boring to bring someone traditional in to do *The Fiery Angel*—that is not what you expect of Prokofiev." But, at the same time, he wants to make sure that more traditional operas are staged in a way that respects their stance and their history.

"I can not physically change the repertoire in a few years—it would be a joke to talk about a complete revolution, and I have no intention of doing that. We have to look carefully at what we already own. I am referring to the greatest people ever painting for the theater—Korovin, Golovin, Bakst and Benois. Their designs are still so fresh and strong and very passionate—who can imagine Russian operas in cool, mechanical drawings? That's one part of our heritage I am determined to preserve."

As to tickets, tourists will still pay western prices to attend the Kirov, but Gergiev refuses "to punish the people of Russia who love opera. They already have many unavailable things, even food, and are living from day to day." So a double standard will continue to exist for some time to come, one that parallels Russia's current Jekyll and Hyde financial existence in which two different economies—rubles and dollars—are made to coexist. He determined that the Kirov will remain a living room within an easy grasp of the people of St. Petersburg.

Russia is a remarkable and magnetic country of contradictions and frequent chaos, but Gergiev is resolute in his belief that "The Kirov doesn't have to be as chaotic as the rest of Russia, but it requires someone to be strong. People in the west, morally, should be doing something to help, because the Kirov is part of world opera, a part that cannot be allowed to disappear—it is too important and too beautiful not to survive.

"We don't own Russian opera, but the Kirov is an authentic representative of a major portion of the world's operatic literature, so it is important for the west to act. There is still enough strength left in the Kirov that it will not be in ruins in three or four years' time. I intend to make it as strong by the year 2000 as it was 100 years ago, when it was one of the richest theaters in the world. I have to make it happen, and it will, for God knows I'm not scared of anything."

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fashionable moderns coupled with the enthusiasm of two of the most conservative musical members of the Russian emigré community (the one an unreconstructed partisan of Scriabin, the other a latter-day Rimskian, and both rabid anti-Stravinskians), should have tipped Prokofiev off that he had fallen behind the march of chic. He would never recapture his former standing with the Paris tastemakers. For one as addicted as Prokofiev to prestige, it was an intolerable situation that would lead him inexorably back to Russia and, eventually, to the tragic Stalinist finale of his career.

But not even in his musically conservative homeland could *The Fiery Angel* achieve production. Myaskovsky reported that one of his students, to whom he showed the score, reacted unfavorably to its outmoded "Wagnerism." But that was the least of it. The Soviet Union was, after all, the least hospitable venue imaginable for an opera having to do with religious mysticism and sexual obsession. As late as 1935, Myaskovsky naively supposed the opera might be staged in a sufficiently "anti-religious" fashion to pass the political censorship, but there was also totalitarian prudery to contend with—as poor Shostakovich would find out only a year later, at great expense, in connection with his *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*.

Prokofiev tried to make light of things. "Could it be that in Moscow they saw a Wagnerian influence in this opera?" he wrote back to Myaskovsky. "What the devil! I had nothing of the sort in mind and don't even like that composer any more. And tell your little modernist, by the way, that another little modernist, whom they tout hereabouts as the very Moses of modernism, was not above whistling a bit of *Meistersinger* in his *Apollo*!" But invidious comparisons with Stravinsky were precisely what was working most against him.

Seeing the handwriting on the wall, Prokofiev undertook a salvage operation. Extracting a suite from his opera, he found that "the material unexpectedly packed itself up into a four-movement symphony." The symphony would be his Third (Op. 44, 1928), which he gratefully dedicated to the ever-supportive Myaskovsky. Since so many of the themes in *The Fiery Angel* were conceived "abstractly," in advance of the operatic project, Prokofiev always insisted that the symphony was not a summary or an ersatz of the opera, but an independent, non-programmatic composition.

The first movement, in sonata-allegro form, is as long as the other three put

together. It is built on the three main leitmotives described above, plus what Prokofiev called "Ruprecht's love theme" (introduced near the end of the first act, when Ruprecht first shows signs of interest in Renata), and "Ruprecht's martial theme" (first heard in Act II right before the conjuration). Renata's "hysterical" ostinato opens the exposition (hence the symphony's rather arbitrary C-minor key signature). The first theme is the "white-hey" Madiel melody, with Ruprecht's love theme furnishing the second, and the martial theme bringing the exposition to a close. The development section consists mainly of the "duel" entr'acte from Act III, in which all these themes are contrapuntally juxtaposed and reach a climax.

The slow second movement, which Prokofiev described as being "entirely of an abstract character," opens with the quiet music that sets the scene for the convent orgy in Act V, then proceeds unexpectedly to the Faustian burlesque from Act IV, Scene 2. In the scherzo, the outer sections develop the amazing spectral music for complex divided strings that accompanies the Act II spirit séance—possibly Prokofiev's modernist high point—while the Trio is drawn from the second scene of Act III (the aftermath of the duel). The movement ends with the music that closes the opera. For the finale, Prokofiev drew upon the monumentally frightening Agrippa scene from Act II.

With the completion of the symphony, the opera on which it had fed was, in the words of Charles Bruck (eventually the opera's first conductor), "carefully packed up and consigned to oblivion" in the basement of the Editions Russes de Musique, Koussevitzky's firm. Prokofiev never lived to see staged—or even hear in the orchestra—the work on which he had labored for seven years, and which to the end he considered to be the *chef d'oeuvre* of his period in emigration. Few composers could have had any greater disappointment. After the Second World War the score was unearthed by Hans Swarsenski of Boosey & Hawkes, the British house that had acquired the Koussevitzky catalogue. The first complete (concert) performance was given on November 25, 1953, in French, under the title *L'Ange de feu*, at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris by forces of the RTF (French radio) under Bruck, with Lucienne Marée as Renata. Two years later, this performance was recreated for records, but with Jane Rhodes in the main role. The stage premiere took place in

Venice, at Teatro La Fenice, on September 14, 1955, as part of the XVIII International Festival of Contemporary Music. Nino Sanzogno was the conductor and Dorothy Dow sang Renata. It took another thirty years before a vocal score was published, with the text in the original language (Moscow: Muzika, 1985). The first Russian production was in the provincial city of Perm in 1987; the Kirov Opera finally staged it at the Maryinsky Theater in St. Petersburg in December of 1991, in a joint production with the Royal Opera that opened in London in April of 1992. The only currently available recording, made in Gothenburg, Sweden, under Neeme Järvi, was issued in 1991.

* * *

Post scriptum: Nina Petrovskaya, alias Renata, having fled Russia in despair after the collapse of her relationship with Bryusov, was Prokofiev's Paris neighbor all during the period in which he was revising and orchestrating the opera he had unwittingly based on her life—a life that would end some months before the disastrous partial Parisian premiere of *The Fiery Angel*. She never learned of the opera's existence, as its composer never learned of hers. Her fate, as unhappy as that of the work she had unknowingly inspired, was described in a famous memoir, *Renata's End*, by Vladislav Khodasevich's widow, Nina Berberova. It is from Berberova that we quote:

Her life was tragic from the very day she abandoned Russia in 1912. How she made a living in Rome during the First World War, no one asked; she probably lived in part by charity, if not worse. At night she couldn't sleep, she needed time and again to stir up the past. Khodasevich sat with her in what was called my room. I resigned myself to sleeping in his room on the couch. Tortured by conversations and smoking, grown numb from her drunken tears and codeine-inspired delirium, towards morning he came and lay down next to me, frozen, tired, half sick himself. Sometimes I tried to force her to eat something, to take a bath, to wash her hair, to launder her underwear and stockings, but she was already incapable of anything. Once she left and did not return. She had no money. A week later she was found dead in a garret of a Salvation Army flophouse: she had turned on the gas. It was February 23, 1928. ■

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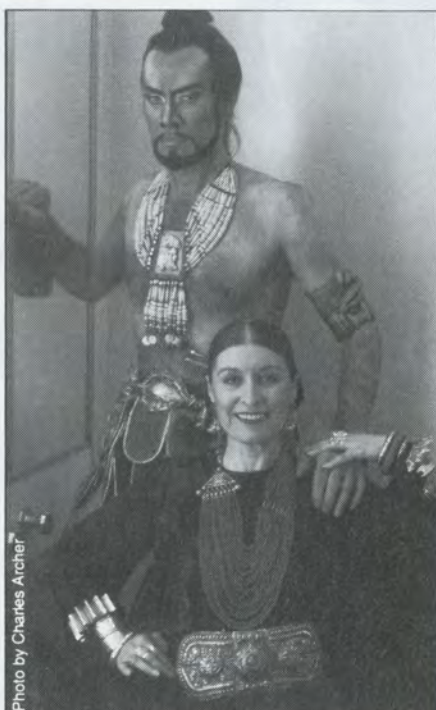


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Sponsored by the San Francisco Opera Guild, house and backstage tours of the War Memorial Opera House will be conducted every half hour from 10 a.m. to 12 noon on weekdays and on Saturday; and every 15 minutes from 10 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Sundays on the following dates:

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Information: (415) 552-8338.

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Ticket Information. San Francisco Opera's Ticket and Patron Services Center, 199 Grove at Van Ness, open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Opera House Box Office: open 2 hours before each performance through the first intermission on performance days only. Phone charge: (415) 864-3330, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday (VISA, American Express, MasterCard). Tickets are also available on a limited basis through BASS and STBS outlets.

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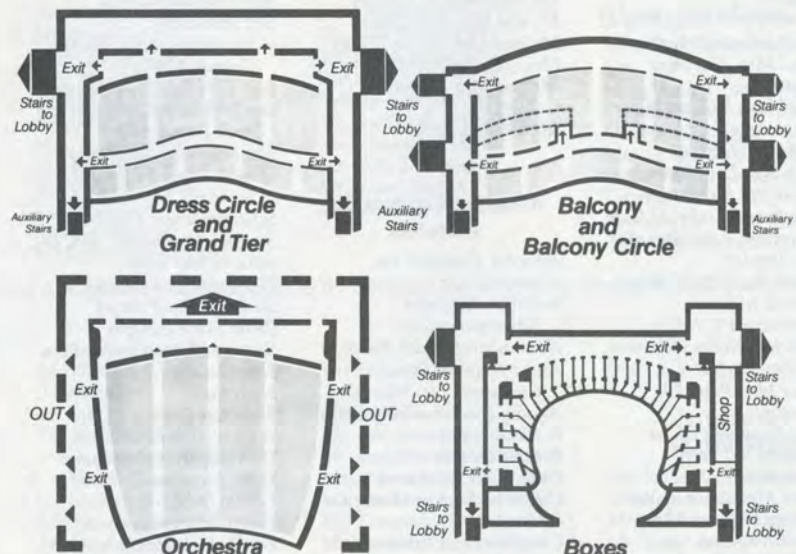
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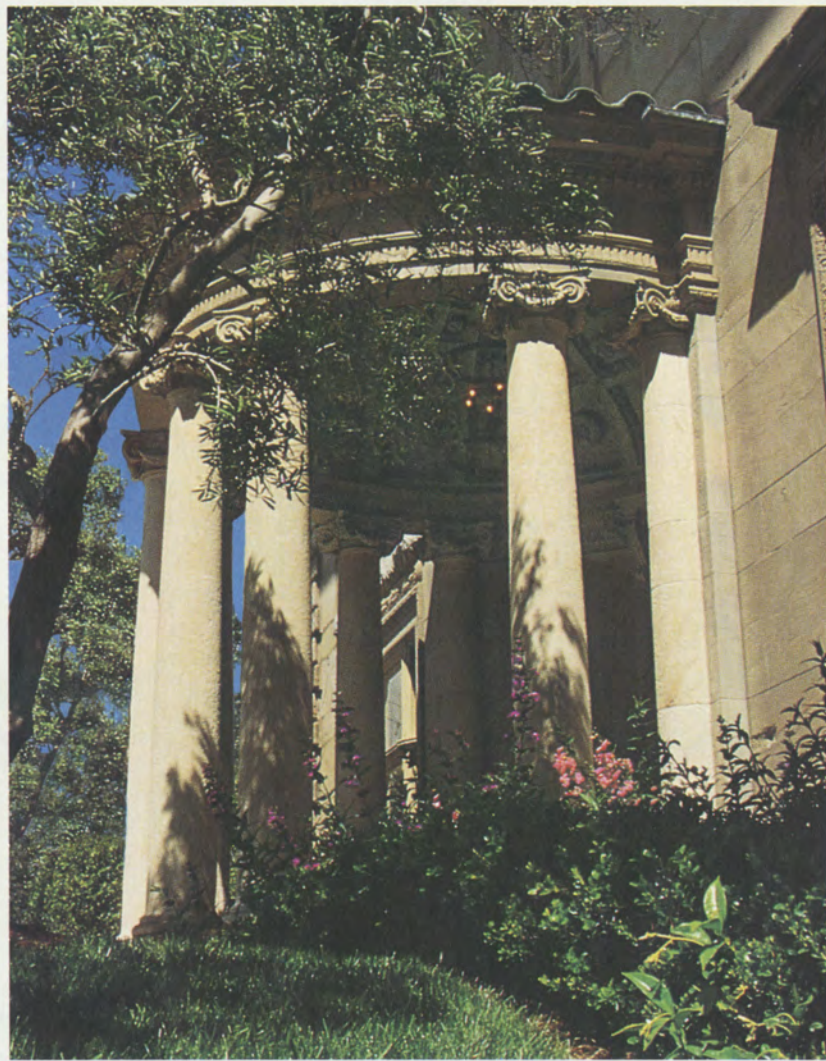


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